

FATE ON WINGS.

BY LOUISE DUPEE.

A LITTLE island sits sunning itself in the sea, as if some inland meadow had been seized with a spirit of adventure and strayed away from home, taking the jolliest of its birds, the greenest of its larches, and the starriest of its buttercups for company. At one point it climbs up a great rock, as if it aspired to take a view of the world; and there a few years ago a lighthouse was perched, with a tiny cottage to hold the lightkeeper's family nestling at its foot.

It was a June afternoon, and Mrs. Burnise, the lightkeeper's wife, having done up her work with the aid of her niece Laura, was sitting in the kitchen door, drawing a fine-toothed comb through her lank black hair, while she entertained a visitor, her sister-in-law, Miss Jane Burnise, who had just arrived from Rockport in a fishing-smack.

"Don't you find it dretful lonesome here, Barbary?" said Miss Jane, slowly unfolding her knitting-work. "You've allers been used to so much socierty, two houses within half a mile of you, and preachin' privileges every other Sunday. I should think 'twould come hard to you to live here. Still, it's lucky Lisher got the place. I was wonderin' what he *would* do when he got up from the rheumatiz with that lame arm. Proverdunce allers provides."

"Yes," sighed Mrs. Burnise, "and I s'pose I orter be thankful; but 'tis dread-ful lonesome here. There aint ben a day sence I've ben here but I've wisht I was on the main." On the mainland she meant.

"It's so discouragin' to hev nobody to drop in, nobody to talk to, no meetin', and no nothin'. I don't know but what I shall forgit how to use my tongue. Burnise never was no company, you know; he never talks no more than's if he hadn't no tongue; and as for our Lorry, her wits is allers a wool-gatherin', and every minit she can git after her work's done, and the children's lessons is over, she's out starein' at the water, and pullin' bluebells, and pickin' up shells, and all sorts o' trash.

Sometimes I think I never can stan' it another day, 'specially when the Sabbath comes, and I think what good times you're havin' over to the Port, with Elder Smart to supper, and all the folks over from Tatnick."

"I should suppose you'd miss your meetin' privileges more'n anything else," said Miss Jane. "I was tellin' Sister Jenkins the other day that she didn't realize half her mercies. They've been holdin' a protracted meetin' in her deestrick, and she had three ministers and two deacons in the house for a week, and went to meetin' herself besides doin' her work mornin', afternoon and evenin' the whole endurin' time, till, stout as she is, she got so beat out she could hardly set up at the last end. Hiram's folks was over, and Betsy she made some custards, and put three eggs in each one of 'em, and had a reg'lar tea-party. 'Twas a very solemn and interesting occasion, as Elder Fales remarked."

"You don't tell!" said Mrs. Burnise, with her comb suspended in air, entirely overwhelmed by the mere contemplation of such exciting scenes. "Sister Jenkins is a lucky woman, but then, she allers spiles her meetin's by spankin' that unruly Sam of hers just afore she goes. She says she has to, coz she don't dare to trust him so long out of her sight without it. Ef 'twas me, I shouldn't enjoy my mind at all, after gettin' so riled up. I s'pose she's had as many as three new gowns sence I saw her," she added, her mind suddenly taking a more worldly turn.

"That reminds me," said Miss Jane, "that I've got something for Lorry in my bundle. Sister washed her red and green plaid, and it shrunk so she couldn't get it together round her waist nowhere near; so she said she had a good mind to send it over to Lorry, seein' as she had no girls of her own, and Lorry was a poor orphyn, and her brother's child, and I told her I'd take it along with me. I hope it'll fit the child. See, aint it a beauty?" And she held it up to the admiring gaze of Mrs. Burnise.

"Lorry don't need it no more than nothin' at all," said that lady, after a critical examination of the brilliant-hued garment. "Miss Jenkins aint much of a sewer, is she? That stitchein' beats everything that ever I see. 'Tis a pretty thing, but like as not Lorry'll turn up her nose at it; she thinks her Aunt Jenkins's taste is dretful. I could make two gowns out of it, one for Elminy, and one for Phebe Jane. Lorry's got more gowns than all the rest of us put together, if she is a poor orphan. I let her keep school over to the Creek last fall, you know—slaved myself almost to death a doin' my housework without her, and never took none of her wages only enough to buy my green alpaca. She's got a new delaine and two good calicos."

"Hem!" said Miss Jane, with a little tightening of her lips. "It's nothing to me. The gown was sent to Lorry—and by the way, how is Lorry? I've scarcely had a glimpse of her yet. Is she contented here without her young companions? Solertude generally comes harder to young folks than to them along in years."

"Well, no," said Mrs. Burnise, "I don't think she is contented; but as for that matter, she never *was* contented anywhere that I know of, only she isn't one of the complainin' kind. She never had no young companions, coz she was too stuck up after she come from the 'cademy to hev anything to do with the young folks over to the Port. Her father mised it when he spent everything he had on her eddication, and then left her without a penny, to be taken care of by her hard-worked relatives. I a'pose he didn't reckon on dyin' so soon, though. Lorry's young yet. She wont be eighteen till September, and they say she keeps school well ernuff; but 'cordin' to my notions it would have been full as well for her, and for other folks, too, if she had not got quite so much learnin', so many silly streaks go along with it."

"So I allers thought," said Miss Jane, decidedly. "'Tis settin' her up above her own folks, and unfittin' her for housework or any useful branch of industry. I told Willyum what I thought about it in the first place, but he wouldn't hear nothin' to me. Poor Willyum! he was allers hankerin' after learnin' himself, and bringin' home more books than money from furrin parts. Ef he hadn't had so many of them books in his head, he'd a had a better look-

out for his property. Learnin's well ernuff ef a person's got ernuff sense to balance it properly. Now I've got some learnin' myself. Folks used to call me the intellectual Miss Burnise when I was younger. Don't you remember the first verses I wrote, Barbary? They was 'bout Jacob Clarke's son that was drowned down to Goose Cove, and was printed in the County Dial, and everybody read 'em, and praised 'em, and wondered at 'em, and everybody stared at me afterwards as if I was Queen Victory, or somebody full as grand. But my talents didn't never interfere with my fingers, or put me to sleep, as Willyum's did him."

"I know you've got beautiful learnin'," said Mrs. Burnise. "Lisher's got them verses saved up now, and a 'bituary besides, on the death of old Deacon Simmons, that is very affectin'." And she directed an admiring glance at her sister-in-law, who winced most becomingly.

"I've always been worried 'bout Lorry," began Miss Jane, very modestly dropping the subject of her literary acquirements; "and I've been more worried than ever since that blessed awakenin' in our destrict last fall. All through them powerful meetin's, when Miss Clark's Miry was so affected she couldn't do nothin' but jump right up and down all day long, and Clary Sanborn couldn't get any peace of mind no more than nothin', and Samuel Rogers was so happy he must keep a singin' every minit, ef 'twas at the table, that girl was jest as calm and unconcerned as ef Elder Giles was repeatin' over Mother Goose's melodies 'stead of them burnin' words. You know you told me she actually refused to go to meetin' one night, coz she thought the sermons was uncanny, and she didn't bleeve in that kind of excitement at all."

Mrs. Burnise sighed heavily.

"I don't know as she ever will be concerned in her mind," said she; "but I've done my duty by her, and that's all I can do."

"I think on that account that it's a very bad thing for her to be here out of the reach of the voice of the gospel," said Miss Jane. "And to tell you the truth, Barbary, that's one thing I came over here for. Miss Perkins, our minister's wife, is dretfully in need of help. She's got six children now besides the twins, and Emily

Judson, the oldest, is weakly, and can't go to school; so she wants somebody who is competent not only to do a little light housework, but to take care of the babies, and teach Emily Judson besides. When she asked me if I knew of a suitable person to fill the situation, thinks I that's the very place for Lorry. She'll be under good influences there, and if she wouldn't go to meetin' she'd hev the meetin' brought to her. Elder Perkins isn't one of your slack kind, but is up and a doin'."

"Sakes alive!" exclaimed Mrs. Burnise, "I guess 'twould be a little light housework! Why, that sickly Miss Perkins aint fit to do a stitch of work herself, and what is more, she don't do anything but jest worry round and complain 'bout her back. Viry Allen went there to work for a spell, and was made such a slave of, that she was all skin and bone when she come away. She says that Miss Perkins aint nothin' but spleeny, though, and wont lift her hand as long as she can git work out o' other folks. They say the elder used to do the washin' himself when they was first married. Ketch Lorry to go to a place like that, and ketch Lisher to 'low her to go! He's dretful afraid I shall put too much upon her. I raly bleeve he sets more store by her than by his own children, or me either. He—"

Here the entrance of the object of her discussion caused a sudden silence. She was a tall slender girl, with a wealth of pale golden hair and deep brown eyes. Her grace and beauty would have been remarkable in a city *salon*, and here it was all the more striking in contrast to the rudeness of her surroundings.

"See what a strange visitor we have," she said, displaying a snow-white dove which she bore tenderly in the folds of her apron.

"He flied right out er nowhere to Lorry's shoulder," explained Miss Phebe Jane Burnise, who had followed her cousin into the house. "See, it's got a red collar onto its neck, and it's as tired as anything. It breathes dreadful."

"Sure enuff," said Aunt Jane. "Why, it beats all I ever heard tell on. Where do you s'pose it come from?"

"I cannot imagine," said Laura; "but it must have had a weary flight. Poor little thing, it seems quite exhausted."

"Lor sakes, I wonder how it got here

from anywheres?" exclaimed Mrs. Burnise; "the land's so far away in every direction. And who ever see a dove with a collar on its neck afore? I declare, Jane, if it don't make me feel kind er scary. I'm afeard somethin's a goin' to happen. Don't you remember the queer bird that came into Squire Thompson's house the day afore James Albert was killed? Then I've heard of birds bringing great good luck too. A dove seems lucky."

"But this bird didn't come into the house, Aunt Barbara," said Laura. "I think, by the collar on its neck, it's what they call a carrier-dove. I never saw one, but I've read of them in stories. Probably some one sent it with a message, and it got out to sea. You can see that there is a slip of folded paper in the inside of the collar."

"Do take it off and see what 'tis," said Mrs. and Miss Burnise in the same breath.

Laura hesitated a moment before complying with their request. It was a tiny perfumed note, carefully fastened to the silken lining of the collar. She unfolded it, and with a heightened color read these words:

"My own love, it is for you to say whether I am happy or miserable."

This was all. There was no name, no date, and the mystery was as deep as ever.

"Lorry's a blushin' jest as if 'twas writ to her," said Miss Elmina Burnise, who had just appeared on the scene. "Enyhow, it come to my feet afore it did to her shoulder."

"Wall now, I can't help feelin' as if it was to Lorry," said Miss Burnise, with a startled glance at her niece. "It means somethin', I'm sure, lightin' on her shoulder so."

"Lor sakes! I don't see why it's enymore to Lorry than to my Elmina, ef it did happen to light on Lorry's shoulder 'stead of hern. I allers knowed she'd be lucky, coz she's got two crowns to her head. P'raps one er them fine gentlemen that was here t'other day in a yacht took a fancy to her, and took this way to tell her of it," said Mrs. Burnise, excitedly.

"Barbary!" said Miss Jane, sternly, "I am erstonished that you should put such notions inter that child's mind, and she scarce fourteen years old. 'Taint likely the gentlemen so much as glanced at her, and I hope she warn't forward ernuff to

look at them. When I said I couldn't help feelin' as if 'twas Lorry, I didn't mean nothin' 'bout beaux in pertickerlar, but I felt as if somethin' good was a goin' to happen to her. You allers thought a sight too much about such things. Elminy, hev you read that tract I sent you yet?"

Elmina was too much absorbed in feeding the dove to make any reply; but Mrs. Burnise took up the cudgels in self-defence, making some cutting allusions to Miss Burnise's state of single blessedness, which caused that lady to give her entire attention to the bird also.

The little creature had ceased to pant, and, perched on the back of Laura's chair, looked about the room with an air of perfect content, every now and then giving utterance to a soft little coo.

Laura fastened the note into its collar again, imagining all sorts of pretty romances as she did so. Her two aunts drifted into Port talk once more, and the bird took a prolonged nap, with its head tucked cosily under its wing.

Aunt Jane made a week's visit, and departed in a very ruffled state of mind, because "Lisher" had declared that Lorry shouldn't go to be a slave for the Perkinses, and Job Fisher, who was agent of the Sandy Peak district, had written to ask the young lady to take the winter school there, as he had heard very favorable reports of her management in the Creek school last year.

"Don't you hear nothin' 'bout her goin' there, Lisher," said she, pinning herself into her green shawl, while the boat waited to bear her away. "They're the dreadfullest set you ever heard tell on; always a hevvin' dances, or somethin' of the kind; and Job Fisher himself has been known to play cards. They're well-to-do folks, I know. Old Squire Hastings has been buildin' himself a sort of castle on the top of the Peak almost, and lives in great magnificence, I've heard tell. His son Frank has got to be cap'n of an English steamer, and the grandeur of that has spread over the whole neighborhood. But they're 'varsalists, and 'twould be the ruin of any young girl to go 'mongst them. Why, I shouldn't never git another minit's peace if I thought Lorry was a boardin' at Job Fisher's. He aint the man he ought ter be, by no means in the world!"

"Lor, Jane," said her brother, mischiev-

ously, "you ought not to be so hard on poor Job coz he courted you a spell, then backed out."

"Aint you 'shamed, Lisher? As if I ever wanted Job Fisher, or would a hed him, at any rate!" said the lady, coloring furiously.

Laura wondered if any man was ever audacious enough to court Aunt Jane, for she made her face something alarming in its severity if one of these unworthy beings ventured into her neighborhood. But it seems in her younger days, when she wore her hair in love-curls over her high intellectual forehead, and had the best voice for slinging of all the girls in the singing-school, that Job Fisher, the thriftiest young sailor in the place, took a fancy to pay his attentions to her, though she rarely gave him a smile or a nod beyond a prim "How do you do, Mr. Fisher?" during his patient and protracted visits to her father's house. Still, her heart was supposed to be touched, and the outgrowth of her affections was made manifest in much worsted work in the shape of watch-cases, book-marks, and the like, which she presented to her lover in the most proper manner, and which he received with shy pleasure. But at last his visits suddenly ceased. Miss Jane combed out her love-curls, and abandoned her worsted work. At first everybody wondered what could be the trouble between them, but it was decided in this way by the gossips: the lady was becoming alarmingly literary. If even a six-weeks old baby died in the town, a long string of mournful or consolatory verses appropriate to the event appeared in the county paper, signed by her name. And wasn't it plain enough to be seen that though such a woman might be held in high esteem by the community, and her family be justly proud of her accomplishments, she would make anything but a good wife? The family stockings would not mend themselves while she was making verses, and one with so much brain was apt to be sparing of her feet, and to forget just the right quantity of spice to put into the pudding. Job's family were thrifty, Job was prudent, and prudence subdued the fever of his passion.

Summer did not hurry away from the island, but lingered with its soft fragrant days long after the dry inland fields were browned and desolated by autumn. The

sea spray kept the leaves and grass green, and the wild roses mistook it for dew, and opened their crimson cups gayly under the tanned face of September. Sometimes for days the mist built its white tent over land and sea. Fog-horns sounded dismally from the distance, and everything looked strange, and dreary, and cold; but when at last the sun appeared again like a flash of red fire behind a bank of smoke, and the wind, like some long-absent and most welcome friend, came and gathered up the clouds in his lusty arms, rushing away with them no one knew whither, it seemed as if spring had come back again once more. The leaves danced merrily under the warm blue sky, and the birds declared that there were violet buds hidden somewhere in the green grass. To Laura those days were like enchantment, in spite of their loneliness, in spite of the incessant labor thrust into her hands by relentless Aunt Barbara. Elmina was too delicate to do housework, and sewing made her side ache; so she had not only to assist in the brewing, and the baking, and the dish-washing, but to take the entire care of the younger children, and "they were seven," as Wordsworth pathetically observes. The family darning-needle, too, was given up to her, and as the chief occupation of the energetic seven was to tear their clothes, this homely implement was called into active service. But while her hands were busy her thoughts were free to wander away at their own sweet will. At her age, and with her temperament, a wish is almost as bright as a reality, and the hard-pinched face of Life is rosy enough through the veil of a dream. She had turned one page in the wonder-book of the world, and every day, in her memory, she was reading it over and over again.

So when her young shoulders ached with their heavy burdens, she slipped out of herself, and was in the midst of a festal scene which she caught a glimpse of during that never-to-be-forgotten holiday visit to town. There there were plumes, and pearls, and color, and light, and strains of beautiful music. There the beautiful women were too beautiful to be ordinary mortals, but seemed like fairy princesses; and the gallant gentlemen who waited on them with such devotion, too knightly and noble to be real, but were of the same royal birth as the splendid cavaliers that nod their

silken plumes in some old story of romance.

When Aunt Barbara scolded with her harsh voice she would not hear, but listened instead to the grand oratorio whose swelling harmonies she had kept in her brain ever since that fairest day of her life when she heard them ringing through the stately old city hall. When the soft sky and the lustrous sea were lidden by storm-clouds, and the sharp-nosed faces of Aunt Barbara and "the seven" were the only objects in view, she stole once more into the dimly-lighted art gallery, where she spent the hours of an April day in a perfect trance of delight.

She never realized before that a human figure could be a poem, or that souls could be painted on canvas and carved in marble. She never fully appreciated the wonderful beauties of nature until she saw them through the medium of art.

And in the meantime the white dove which came to her so mysteriously was growing very dear to her lonely heart. The little thing seemed to recognize her as its mistress from the first. He followed her wherever she went, cooed at her while she performed her household labors from some perch near by, and poised itself on the back of her chair for long hours while she sat sewing. Its company cheered and consoled her, but her romantic little soul was troubled for the fond lover whose beloved had never received his message. Would she not wait for him forever without any word of his to bid her do so? or would his silence be misunderstood, and she, perhaps, die, thinking him faithless, perhaps marry another, and break both their hearts by doing so?

"Faithless little dove!" she used to say to it, lifting her finger solemnly; "why were you not true to your trust? or did you lose your way in the great sea, and mistake me for the waiting sweetheart?"

But the bird would only tip its pretty head with the most sublime indifference; and when she took it down to the shore and endeavored to induce it to try its wings again, though it almost broke her heart to think of losing it, it seemed afraid, and would fly back to the shelter of her arms with all possible speed.

"Now, Lorry, you aint a goin' to take that bird over to the Peak with ye?" said Aunt Barbara, as her niece was preparing

to leave the island one frosty October morning. She had found an old cage in which a parrot had been brought from the West Indies years ago, and had fastened her pet into it, who did not seem to approve of the proceeding. "Why, they'll laugh at ye! a schoolmarm a tuggin' a dove round, and it settin' on her shoulder and makin' that cooin' noise like a cryin' baby! Miss Job Fisher's a driver, and she wont 'prove of enybody's spendin' their precious time a fussin' over such a silly thing. What would she think of me, and you a comin' from my house with such thriftless ways?"

"Lor, now! let her take the bird if she's a mind to, Barbary," said Uncle Lisha. "You don't want the trouble of it yourself, I'm sure, and what does it signify?"

"No, that I don't. I hev to work for a livin', but Elminy she's kind er fond of it, and I don't see why it don't b'long to her as much as to Lorry. It may be the means of bringin' her a beau. I never was quite sure that that billet warn't writ to her. She says them smart gentlemen 'twas here in a yacht had a heap er p'lite things to say to her. But then, Elminy's got too much mind to waste much thought over a anemil like that, and Lorry's just silly enough to cry her eyes out over it. I'm dretful shamed to hev Miss Job Fisher know she's relation to me!"

So, thanks to the vastness of Elmina's mind, Laura was allowed to take her pet without further parley; only Aunt Barbara followed her out of the house to say, "If Elminy ever *should* call for that bird, you must give it up, Lorry, for you know it don't justly b'long to you; as long as Elminy's pa has the control of the island, all the birds and things on it b'longs to her, if she's a mind to say so."

Sandy Peak is a quaint little village clustered about a baldheaded mountain that stands bleak and grim on the Atlantic coast. But though the situation seems so unpromising, its inhabitants are all well-to-do, the greater number of them being retired sea captains; and the houses are of a much better class than any in that region. Laura found "Miss Job Fisher" motherly and kind, and her new home comfortable and pleasant enough. But as for the school, it was anything but promising. The girls were dull and obstinate, the boys rude and defiant. It was comprised of all

sorts of pupils. Students of the primer just out of long clothes, giggling misses in vulgar fractions, and young men lately surprised out of jackets into the dignity of coats, whose wits were ripe in nothing but mischief. She had been prepared for drudgery, having taught a district school before, but she had not been prepared for anything like this. It was summer when she taught at the Creek, and there were no large boys at school, and no girls who were not much younger than herself. They were docile affectionate pupils. The schoolroom was so quiet that a fly's buzz was startling, and even the stammering little A B C learners seemed alive to the beauty of knowledge. Sometimes, of course, the days seemed dreadfully long and dreary. The shrill voices were harsh to her sensitive ears. She was so tired of repeating the same thing over and over again, of answering questions, and of being sure that the same girl would miss on the same word in her spelling lesson. But the Creek school was paradise compared to the Sandy Peak school. Here vulgar fractions and A B C's were so confusedly mixed together. She did not know how to manage the large boys, who, after tormenting her all day in school, were inclined to make love to her at other times. The most desperate rebel of all telling her that her cheeks were as red as roses, and that she was as pretty as the "figger-head" on his father's new "two-topmaster." It was all in vain that she tried to keep any semblance of order. If she attempted to quell a disturbance in one corner, she discovered some sly trick being prosperously carried out in another. If unusual quiet prevailed, she knew that it was only the lull before the battle. Her cheeks grew thin and white, and the distracted state of her nerves kept her constantly on the very edge of a fever. How often she wished herself back at Uncle "Lisher's," for there, though her burdens were heavy, she had elbow room for her poor little longing soul. But she had a determined spirit. She held her head very high, she closed her mouth resolutely, she spoke in a tone of calm authority, she fixed her eyes full of unflinching purpose on the eyes of her boldest mischief-doers, and at last had the satisfaction of seeing that they quailed under her glance, and their hearts and hands seemed to fail them. She was too

weary even to think when she reached home at night, and the jolly fireside circle at Job Fisher's was seldom added to by her presence. Mrs. Fisher was sure that she was ill, and dosed her with thoroughwort and pennyroyal, which she would swallow meekly instead of supper, then creep away up stairs to her own little room, cheered only by the loving coo of the dove, who, having mourned her absence all day, was overjoyed to see her. More than once it had escaped from the house and followed her to school like Mary's little lamb, its presence having the effect on the pupils as did the presence of that historical animal.

"I never saw the beat," said Mrs. Fisher; "that bird's got affections like a human creature, and it's as touchin' as a story to see that poor orphin girl with the white dove settin' on her shoulder, and she as handsome as a rose, and pale and sad-lookin' as a widder's tear! The women folks in her family are an awful hard set, and as for the men, they aint eny of 'em got gumption ernuff to claim their own souls from 'em. She's had a hard time of it in the world sence her father died, poor thing."

"Jane Burnise wouldn't a been so hard if she'd a got married," said her hearty-looking spouse, musingly. Perhaps his conscience gave him a little pang.

"I don't bleeve 'twould a made a bit of difference," said she, conclusively. "There is Miss Jenkins, she that was Lizy Ann, is jest as bad, if not worse. It's the kind of religion they've got spoils them women. There's two kinds of religion; the right kind sweetens folks amazingly, and the wrong kind sours 'em till there aint no kindness and no nothin' left in 'em."

"Well, I dunno but you're right there, Polly. The thunder'n lightnin' Elder Perkins hurls from his pulpit o' Sundays is ernuff to curdle a whole dairy full of the milk er human kindness!" said the gentleman, with a humorous twinkle in his shrewd gray eyes.

Mrs. Fisher was right when she said that Laura had had a hard time since her father died; and now, in spite of that lady's kindness, she felt more alone than ever. She was so weary in both body and mind, poor child, that she felt more than ever the need of a mother, or a father, or a sister, or brother, who can understand one's troubles as no stranger ever can. Aunt Jane

wrote her a letter now and then, after the style of a camp-meeting exhortation. Aunt Barbara, to tell her to be sure and save all her money, for she didn't need any clothes at present, and her relatives couldn't afford to keep her for nothing so many years. Elmina was going over to the Port to attend school, and must have a new dress. Job Fisher's eldest son, an honest but most awkward young sailor, made shy love to her whenever he found an opportunity to do so.

But his love found no response in the young girl's breast, and only to the poor unconscious dove could she confide all her troubles. It did seem to understand, its soft eyes would grow so sad and sympathetic, and as Laura interpreted its speech it was full of consoling and encouraging utterances. Mrs. Fisher gave it as her opinion "that that bird could tell fortunes, it was knowin' ernuff, surely." And Laura always felt as if her life-destiny were in some way connected with its coming. She regarded it with the same sort of superstition that a Roman Catholic devotee regards his holy relics, sure of its charm for good.

It was Saturday afternoon. The earth sparkled in its white wintry garments, but the skies were blue and bright with the expectation of spring. The sea, tired of raging, and threatening, and pursuing the ships with its terrible vengeance through a long week of storm, lashed its foam playfully against the rocks, and laughed in the sunshine; and the seabirds whirled in merry circles over the tall weather-beaten crags. The air was so soft and balmy that for the first time in many weeks Laura took a long holiday ramble, taking her pet with her, who cooed with delight at its unwonted freedom in the company of its beloved mistress. She climbed the steep hill road that wound through the quaint little village, past gray, melancholy-looking little cottages through whose seaward windows the sailors' wives were always straining their eyes to catch a glimpse of returning sails; past the trim comfortable-looking houses of the retired captains, decorated with the spoils of foreign lands, and the proud mansion of Squire Hastings, the great man of the community, whose wonderful magnificence cast a glory over the whole town. Above that, nearly on the summit of the Peak, a quaint old windmill was whirling in the spring air, and Laura

stopped under its shadow to rest a while.

The river from that point was beautiful. Sunset was burning in the west, and shedding its soft reflections over the otherwise dusky world. She was surrounded by a waste of broken rocks that looked like the sea broken into foamy waves, but far beyond to the left was a strip of yellow beach and groups of tenderly-tinted cliffs, and to the right, stretching out before a range of snow-peaked mountains, a little white town gleamed through shadows of rosy purple. Straight before her ran the narrow line of the road, winding picturesquely around steep knolls and dusky clusters of evergreens, lost for a space between the irregular roofs of the village, appearing again near its journey's end, the sea.

She was so absorbed in the contemplation of all this beauty, that she did not notice the gentleman who was coming towards her up the southern slope of the hill. He walked with a carelessly observant air until he reached the spot where she was sitting, then came to a sudden standstill, regarding her with a look half surprise, half pleasure. It was such a pretty picture. The picturesque old mill whirling its soundless wheel in the sunset glow, and the beautiful young girl dreaming under its shadow, with a white dove poised on her shoulder. The droop of her head, in its rustic scarlet hood, was full of unconscious grace; her hands were folded idly in her lap, and all the lights and shadows, the loneliness of the sea, and the mountains and the cliffs, were reflected in her wide brown eyes.

He turned his head for a moment, to see what those eyes found so alluring in the dreamy distance.

A star appeared, like an unfallen tear-drop on the faded cheek of day, and aroused her to a sense of the lateness of the hour.

She felt the thrill of a strange presence, and bringing her gaze nearer home, it fell on the fine clear-cut profile of the stranger. It flashed over her that he looked like one of the bronze knights in the art gallery, but before she had time to wonder, he turned his head, and their eyes met in one quick confused glance. He removed his cap politely, coloring like a schoolboy as he did so, and Laura was conscious of blushing to the ears. Then the dove, who had been dozing in the sunshine, became

suddenly aroused, and uttering a perfect chorus of joyful sounds, flew from her shoulder and alighted on his arm, looking up into his face as if it recognized it as that of an old friend.

"Why, Jolie! this can never be you," exclaimed the gentleman, examining the little creature's collar with eager surprise. "This is a miracle almost."

"May I ask you how this bird came into your possession?" he said, approaching Laura with that peculiar shyness and stiffness which sometimes clings to a shy man after he has seen the world, and which no surprise can startle from him.

Poor Laura! how her heart sank within her. And yet, had she not been longing to know the romance of the bird's history, and trying to weave its story for herself ever since it came to her that summer day? Must she lose it now, and all her pretty dreams with it? But she told him the whole story in her simple graceful way, the color coming and going in her cheek, and her eyes full of eager interest. When she had finished, he stood for some moments without speaking, apparently more absorbed in the speaker than her story.

"It is very strange," he said at last. "I had no thought of ever seeing the little thing again. It flew from my ship while we were at least two hundred miles from land. It must have found more than one resting-place before it reached any shore; perhaps it reached some strange ship, and sailed in it toward this remote region. But what freak could have sent it to that island? Why didn't it remain where it could rest its poor tired wings, instead of taking another such aimless flight? I am delighted to know that it is safe, for I felt a sort of superstition concerning it. It was given to me by a dying sailor, who begged of me never to part with it, but to care for it tenderly as long as it lived. It was all he had in this world, poor fellow, and he prized it more than his life. He was a Frenchman, and served in the late war between France and Germany, and the bird was given him by his sweetheart for the purpose of conveying letters between them during their separation. He received a severe wound, and while lying on the field, before the smoke and tumult of the battle had died away, the dove fluttered down to his breast. He had just strength enough to unfasten its collar and

open the letter which it bore, anticipating consoling words from his beloved which should sustain him in his anguish. It contained news of her death. Poor Jean! he recovered from his wound at last, but he never recovered from that blow. When he joined the ship, six months afterward, at Paris, he looked like an old man, though he was only twenty-two years old."

Laura's eyes filled with tears of sympathy. "There was a note in its collar when it came to me," said she, "and I have kept it there all this time, thinking that it might some day seek the one for whom it was destined."

"You needn't have taken the trouble," said the gentleman, smiling with a little shade of scorn. "The note was of no consequence, I am sure. The ladies on shipboard found the bird very entertaining; were continually sending it from one part of the ship to the other with messages for their gentlemen friends, or any gentlemen who might see fit to appropriate them. Probably the poor little thing was bewildered at such novel proceedings, and as no one claimed this last message, felt it to be its duty to fly away and seek its owner."

Dusk was gathering around them. Lights danced in the village windows, and the moon rose slowly out of the distant sea.

"It is growing dark, and I must hasten home," said Laura, who had been so absorbed in the romance of the carrier-dove that she had forgotten everything else. She gave the little creature who had been her dearest friend for so long a mute caress, and as she did so the tears fell from her eyes, in spite of all her efforts to keep them back.

"You are attached to the bird," said the gentleman. "Keep it, then. You will care for it much more tenderly than I could, and surely poor Jean would be more than satisfied if he could know into whose hands it had fallen."

"No," said Laura, firmly. "You are very kind, but I too have a superstitious feeling concerning the little thing. I am deeply attached to it, but as the poor sailor gave it to you when he was dying, bidding you to care for it always, I think it is right that you should do so. Indeed, I could not keep it under the circumstances. How like a story it all seems."

He smiled at her earnestness.

"May I not accompany you home?" he

said. "But I ought to introduce myself, Mrs. Job Fisher, your landlady, is an old friend of mine. I wonder if you never heard her speak of that good-for-nothing boy Frank Hastings who once came in the mysterious garb of a ghost, and helped himself to her sweet apples. No other boy in all the history of the town was ever successful in his attempts at robbing that tree, but the ghost ate to his heart's content, besides filling his pockets, then moved silently away without even the mildest remonstrance from its owner. I don't think Mrs. Fisher ever forgave me that little escapade, but I hope you will not judge me by the sins of my youth. I assure you that I repented long ago. I repented first under the vengeance-threatening tongue of that irate lady, who in due time found me out; again under the poetical but pungent punishment of the birch in the hands of an avenging father, and I am not sure but that I repented still another time, with that true repentance which the prayer-book advises. What is more, I never did so again."

Laura thought he deserved absolution.

"I think I have heard Mrs. Fisher speak of Mr. Frank Hastings," she said, "but certainly not in connection with orchard robbing."

It was true that she had spoken of him, in rather a doubtful manner, but then, Mrs. Fisher did not approve of stuck-up people, anyway, and the Hastings family were supposed to be of that class.

She needed no introduction. She was sure from the first, that she was conversing with no other than young Captain Hastings, who was so rich, and so grand, that it was the wonder of all the townsfolk that he had condescended to begin life as a Sandy Peak baby. But how did he know her, she wondered. He could not have been in the place long, or she should have heard of his arrival, for if even the great gate of the Hastings place was heard to click, the event was duly chronicled in the neighborhood.

Conversation flagged as they wound their way village-ward over the long dusky road. Captain Hastings was wondering what there could be in the presence of the young girl that thrilled him so. He had never experienced anything of the kind before in all his life. Had he taken such a leap in love? It seemed impossible. He had al-

ways imagined one to be led along, all unconsciously into that charmed state, through delicate and shadowy enchantments, delicious surprises, and tender awakenings. But what a subtle charm there was about her! She was so frank, so unconscious, so different from the fashionable throngs of women who went over to Paris in his ship, and made him blush, shy and modest man that he was, by their overwhelming attentions. He had never been particularly attracted to any woman before, but now it seemed that "fate and he had met." Even at that early hour he was beginning to torment himself with jealous doubts and fears. Had not some more fortunate man already won the prize, and was he not too old to please the fancy of one so young as she? And though he made efforts to stop and laugh at himself, his thoughts would go on winding and unwinding the same thread.

"I shall call to-morrow, and inform you as to the dove's state of mind, if you will allow me to do so; and perhaps if it manifests great grief at the separation, you will repent and take it back again," he said, as they parted at Job Fisher's door.

"Lor sakes!" said Mrs. Fisher, when Laura appeared with her story, and without her dove. "These rich folks never lose anything, money nor birds. Luck is allers with 'em. There's old Cap'n Hastings, he never lost a vessel in his life; not that he was eny better sailor than enybody else, but jest because he'd got the upper hands of Fortin', and she didn't dare to go back on him, noways. He used ter say if you let that freaky lady turn the cold shoulder to you once, she'd do it again, but if you got fairly on the right side of her, there warn't much danger of her playin' you eny mean tricks. So 'twas the cap'n that see you home? Well, that's somethin' amazin'," she continued, "I know you're pretty ernuff, and lady ernuff to 'tract a prince, child, but them Hastingses are so dretful high in their notions. If one of the Peak girls gets as much as a bow from the young cap'n, she's all in a flutter. Don't let him turn your head, my dear, with his fine looks and perlitte manners. He aint one half as good as my Dick, now, for all he's so handsome and rich."

Captain Hastings appeared at the Fisher mansion early the next evening, so early that Mrs. Fisher had the satisfaction of

knowing that her neighbors must have seen his arrival, and envied her the distinction of having such a guest.

Laura greeted him with a blush, and made eager inquiries concerning her pet friend.

"It is more dejected than you can imagine," said he. "It mourns your absence as it did that of poor Jean, its master, after he died. It seems to be rather fond of me, too, but still I cannot coax it into forgetting you."

"Poor little thing!" said Laura, tremulously; "but it will get over it in time, and be as merry as ever."

He stayed a long time, so long indeed, that Mrs. Fisher grew so sleepy she forgot that she had her best cap on, and leaning back in her chair, crushed it dreadfully.

Laura sang a quaint old sailor's love-song at his request, accompanying herself on a broken-hearted but not unmusical old piano-forte, which Job Fisher had brought home from Amsterdam years and years ago. Captain Hastings, who had been reading poetry, said to himself, "Please God, this is the one voice for me."

Neither he nor Laura remembered Mrs. Fisher's presence, and that lady looked on aghast, to see how perfectly at home was the young girl with the grand stranger. Just her usual self, but for a more vivid light in her wide brown eyes, and a softer, deeper blush on her fair cheek.

"You like Cap'n Hastings very much, don't you, dear?" she said, when that gentleman had taken his leave at last.

Laura grew scarlet to the tips of her ears. She felt as if she was under the "inquisitorial applying of the question," and yet what a natural thing it was to say at such a time:

"Yes, I think I do like him very much," she faltered, escaping to her own room as soon as possible.

Morning came full of sunny brightness. Spring was in the air, and clusters of rosy sails flecked the glittering sea; the waves sang a song full of happy promise, and the birds were twittering merrily on the beach. It was within fifteen minutes of school-time, and Laura stood on the doorsteps waiting for little Tom Rollins, who was always heart-broken if he missed escorting "teacher" to school. A schooner had just anchored at the foot of the Bluff, and a boy emerging therefrom, ran swiftly to-

wards her, with a letter in his hand. It was from Aunt Barbara, and ran thus:

"grene iland light.

"DEER NEECE, bruther jons foks hev broke up housekeepin' And moved Out West and as my sister Merhitable is Thrown out uv a home by There goin im expectin. to Take hur to live with me she will help Me about my house wurk, and as the house Aint big ernuff fer too more you Need not kum back agen i spose your scule is Don in a fu dais But i dont think ower wais soots each uther verry well And the iland aint The plais fer a Gurl uv your Age and yure Aunt jane is in faver uv yure goin to elder perkinse thinkin that yer might be brote to a senoe of yure Sinful sitooation by that godly mann. 'afore you git another scule. hopein These fu linis Find you in gude helth i am yure affeckshunate Aunt

"BARBAREE."

"p S Elminy bez got a bo won uv the turners from firetown a gude stiddy likely feller. Elminy engoys dretful poor helth as usuerl and Sends hur respects."

Poor Laura! she did not expect much from Aunt Barbara, but this heartless dismissal from the only home she ever knew was a heavy blow to her. She knew that Uncle Lisha loved her, and thought it was more than likely that he knew nothing of this plan of his wife's. He was a weak, sickly little man, and seldom ventured to raise his voice against any of that determined lady's doings, but still he had always interfered in her behalf, and sometimes his interference had served to make her life smoother, her burdens lighter. She felt that he was the only person in the world who really cared for her, and bitter tears welled up into her eyes with a new sense of loneliness and desolation. But the tears were still clinging to her lashes, when another message came to her, one so strange, and so sweet, that it seemed as if no sorrow could ever touch her again.

A pair of white wings flashed in the sunny distance, and the fleetest and, gladdest messenger Love ever sent, came the carrier dove bearing a folded note, placed conspicuously in its silken collar.

"Please teacher, it's schooltime," said little Tom Rollins, regarding her with wide-open eyes, as she sat pale and trembling over that magic page. The bird waited beside her, still and breathless, as if in suspense. It was the same note which out of romantic pity for the imaginary lovers, Laura had bidden her pet to carry for so long, only that there were more words add-

ed to it, a question most eloquently put, and a name signed at the end.

"I promised to be good this week, and I'm not going to be tardy," said little Tom, starting off alone, with an air of reproachful dignity.

Back, with only a spray of evergreen for answer, flew the dove, and wrapped in that sweetest dream that never comes but once to this life, Laura allowed herself to be led toward the schoolhouse by the anxious hand of her virtuous little pupil. Upon his small pug nose glittered a tear, which had fallen for her sins, but he had considered it to be his duty to turn back and try to redeem her once more.

The dove had almost reached its destination, and Laura watched its flight with a quickly beating heart, thinking of the dove of old, who carried the green spray as a signal of peace. Would it carry as much joy to him, as his message had brought her?

When noon came, the handsome brown face which she expected so fondly, appeared at the schoolroom door, and unmindful of the group of curious faces around them, the owner of the handsome brown face took her in his arms and saluted her as a man salutes the one whom he has chosen to be his own for life.

Mrs. Job Fisher, to use her own expression, was so flustered when she heard the news, that she put on her pink-ribboned cap over her washday hood, and went in to see the captain in this wise. "Fine folks even fall in love different from other folks," said she. "Here at the Peak, it takes a good patient spell of settin' up nights, and quarrellin', and makin' up agen, to bring about an engagement, but the cap'n went right off, at the first glance, and is tryin' to hev the weddin' next week."

"Lorry goin' to merry one of them ungodly Hastingses?" exclaimed Aunt Jane, with uplifted hands, when she heard it. "Well, we must be resigned to the ways er Providence, as long's they're so rich. I allers knew Lorry's eddication would do wonders for her, and 'twas through my influence she got that eddication. Lorry knows how much I've done for her."

Aunt Barbara, forgetful of the letter she had just sent, wrote another, tenderly reproachful that her dear niece, whom she had always considered as a daughter, should think of leaving their family so soon.

Her few months' absence had given them great grief, and how could they endure to lose her entirely? Elmina's health was suffering greatly from the excess of her emotions on this score.

Before another month had passed Laura had sailed to the old world with her husband. Under other circumstances, she would have preferred to delay her wedding for a while, but as she had no home to shelter her, she could not well say nay, when her lover proposed that the happy event should take place as soon as it could be prepared for.

Her skies are blue all the time now, and she can revel in the beautiful things she used to dream of, to her heart's content. But love is so much more than all other beautiful things which God gives us, she is sure that blessed by its presence, even teaching the Peak school might be a paradisiacal employment. The dove accompanies the happy pair wherever they go, regarding all their little love-makings with a complacency which is blended with great dignity, as if it were fully aware that their happy fate floated to them on its own snow-white wings.

FOR PIQUE.

BY CORA CHESTER.

THEY two sat together in the gathering twilight, he a handsome man of thirty, and she a plain, rather awkward girl, in her teens. What Guy Trenholm found to interest him in this rather dowdy specimen of womankind, his friends had queried in vain. The fact stood he was interested, in spite of his oft-repeated declaration to his admiring hangers-on, that "girls were a decided bore, and that he for one had wearied of love-making."

Hilda Grenville's plain face wore an expression new to it, as she sat on a low step at Trenholm's feet, watching every change in the worldly face, whose owner gazed at the sky, and lazily puffed away at a fragrant Havana. Perfect content and love shone in the honest eyes raised to his face, and Trenholm caught the look of devotion ere the lids drooped over the gray orbs to hide her secret. He smiled in a self-satisfied manner down upon her in a sort of pity for her weakness.

"Well, little Hilda, of what are you thinking? You have no idea how bright your eyes are. You seem to me the very personification of happiness. How I envy you your enjoyment of life!"

"Why should I not be happy, Mr. Trenholm? I have so many things to make me so. I have thanked God every night this summer for my undeserved blessings."

"Only this summer, Hilda? Were you not happy before I came, little one?"

The voice, inexpressibly sweet and tender, brought the ready tears to Hilda's eyes. No one had ever spoken so kindly to the lonely girl before, and no wonder this man, whom she had seen every day for weeks, had gained such dangerous power over her heart. She turned her burning cheeks and wet eyes from his half-tender, half-critical gaze. Girl as she was, she was woman enough of the world to know that she must hide from him her love until he had at least expressed a desire to possess it.

Trenholm drew a little closer toward this girl who so strangely attracted him, and took one dark labor-stained hand in his own. His critical eyes scanned the

small fingers held so tightly in his broad white hand, then dropped further down, and took in, in one swift glance, the dark calico dress and cowhide shoes of his divinity.

Was this a creature to adorn a summer's romance? this a woman likely to grace the future home of Guy Trenholm, Esquire?

Poor Hilda's plain sunburned face, shilling calico and coarse boots had undone their unfortunate possessor for once, at least. Her fate was decided in that one brief instant by the man beside her. He dropped her hand, and rose from the two chairs he had been occupying with a weary yawn.

"You've been a blessing to me in this desert, Hilda. What would the summer have been without you? Well, I must leave next week. Will you miss me very much when I'm gone?"

He waited in vain for an answer. The girl at his feet struggled hopelessly to utter some commonplace regrets. How she envied at the moment the self-possession of Miss Van Cortland, whose rich dress could be seen behind the heavy shrubbery at the gate; or of any of the heartless flirts who had flitted now and then up to the old farmhouse from the fashionable springs, only a half mile away.

Trenholm's sharp eyes had detected also Miss Van Cortland's presence, and a dark ugly look crossed his face. Some memory of the past stung him as he gazed, and the present, filled with Hilda Grenville's love, ceased to satisfy him.

Gertrude Van Cortland, a plain swarthy woman, rather inclined to *embonpoint*, advanced with slow steps up the road. Her small black eyes took in the moonlighted porch, and Hilda's slight figure at Trenholm's feet. An angry scowl darkened her heavy features.

"What a charming tableau, Trenholm! Gotten up for my appreciative eyes, or does Miss What's-her-name attitudinize for your especial benefit every evening? O for the pencil of a Hogarth!"

Hilda arose with scarlet cheeks, and pushed past the pair. Miss Van Cortland

spoke again, in a soft purring tone, to Mr. Trenholm:

"Guy, you may wonder what induced me to take this lonely walk from the hotel at this hour. Will you walk back with me while I explain the reason?"

Then in a sentimental undertone:

"I have been so very unhappy since last winter. I feel that it will be hard to win your forgiveness for my past folly."

Trenholm looked down upon the coarse heavy features and richly-dressed figure, and turned half away.

Hilda's tender eyes and childish voice seemed pleading with him not to go. After all, was not the present far dearer to him than any dead past? Was it wisest for him to dig up from its grave what was at best but a selfish fancy.

This modern young man was somewhat of a Sybarite by nature, as most modern young men are, and his heart longed for the flesh-pots of Egypt. After all, did such a thing as love really exist? and was it not the height of fanaticism to give up a certain future and fine fortune for what was at best but an intangible romance? If he was sure that he loved Hilda—but he was not sure, and *ambition, long silenced*, because of insufficient means and luxurious habits, rapped at his heart, and drove Hilda from his thoughts and life.

Miss Van Cortland stood upon the lower step of the porch, and lifted her rich skirts with both jewelled hands. Trenholm's moment of indecision had passed; with one glance back at the old farmhouse, and a half sigh for a shattered summer idyl, he folded Miss Van Cortland's shawl tenderly about her shoulders, and walked down the moonlighted path towards the village.

What passed between them can be readily guessed by a glimpse at their past.

Guy Trenholm had universally been voted a good fellow by the men of his club; not very rich in this world's goods, but undoubtedly, if fortune proved kind, destined, by his own talents and pluck, for a brilliant future. He proved his ability to win Fortune's favor by paying court to one of her most favored daughters; was graciously received, and given a first place among the many admirers striving for Miss Van Cortland's hand and vast estate.

The many became narrowed to two ere the season was over—a German count (one

of the fair Gertrude's countrymen), and Trenholm, elegant in person, perfect in manners, and irresistibly winning to fashionable women who desire very marked devotion from their followers.

Trenholm became her constant attendant at ball, opera and promenade, and considered himself all but openly engaged.

He was lounging in his apartments one morning, dawdling over a late breakfast, when Mark Egleston, one of those men who are as great gossips as any of the weaker sex, burst open the door, and threw himself upon the lounge with a malicious laugh. News—and uncommon news, too—made his face radiant.

"Well, old boy, all upper-tendom is roused! What the dickens do you think has happened?"

"What a breeze you are, Egleston! Cannot form an idea. Something is always happening," with a highbred languor worthy of Dundreary himself.

"Well, your nose is out of joint, at any rate. Sorry for you, old boy," with an ill-suppressed merriment that belied his words, "'pon honor, I am. It's confounded hard to be made such a fool of by any woman. I thought the fellows would all have burst this morning laughing over it at the club. We all agreed such a fortune wasn't to be picked up with every ugly woman. Query—why the deuce are pretty girls always poor? They are, positively, and the same holds good of pretty young men. You and I are the lawful prey of designing females. What fools women are, though! My colored valet, disguised as a Spanish nobleman, could catch any one of them. If they can only 'read the title clear,' it's all right. For a title now," with a didactic wave of the hand in Trenholm's direction, "real worth and beauty, as represented in the person of my unfortunate and respected friend opposite, are coolly cast aside!"

"Stop your noise, will you," shouted Trenholm, "and explain yourself?"

"O, it's a mere nothing," drawing a paper from his pocket, and smoothing it out in his effeminate white hands; "merely a little article in 'Our Society' that I thought might be of momentary interest to you. It is only the announcement of Miss Van Cortland's engagement to—that fat old Dutchman of a count."

The angry blood dyed Trenholm's face.

"It's a lie!" he shouted. "Who has

dared to print it? I'll make the man suffer—I'll—"

"Hush, my dear fellow," with an irritating tap upon the excited man's shoulder; "don't get heated over it; don't now, I beg! The devil's always to pay when women are around. It isn't a lie. I had it from Bernstein's own lips this very morning. It is true, every word, and the fellows at the club were all congratulating him, and pitying you, as I came away. I knew you'd feel cut up, so I hurried around, to be the first to tell you."

Trenholm shook off his friend's hand, and gave him an ugly scowl.

"I'll be even with her yet. I'll marry the first woman who will have me. You don't think she loves me? I tell you as much of a heart as such a woman can have is mine. I'll make her suffer, for I do not love her. No game is out till it's played out. We will see how you will like a rival, Miss Van Cortland!"

So Hilda Grenville, an unconscious actress in the drama, had been dragged in to play her little part, and she had played it to its bitter end.

What matter to Trenholm if his victim had suffered? He had merely amused himself with a summer's flirtation, and by well-timed devotion to another woman had, as he anticipated, brought Miss Van Cortland to terms.

She had stood the rumors of Trenholm's growing infatuation for the country girl as long as it was in the nature of woman to hear with patience of her own dethronement; then sighing for the empire she had lost, she had made one desperate effort to regain it.

That night Gertrude Van Cortland's solid self and fortune were laid at Trenholm's feet. Wounded vanity, a desire to triumph over the man who had so nearly outwitted him, and old-time ambitious dreams, urged him on. Was it any wonder that a plain little face, though its very memory stirred his heartstrings, failed to keep him when this glittering temptation lay in his path?

Hilda Grenville, a few days later, stood at the stile with dry eyes, waving a last farewell after the old lumbering stage-coach. She could not shed a tear, though all she valued most highly upon earth was being hurried down the dusty road. She

had passed through two days of mortal agony since the night Trenholm mercifully told her of his engagement, and now the fountain of her tears had been wept dry. She had passed beyond the period of acute suffering, and stood impassive and motionless in the burning August sunshine. Never had bird-songs grated so painfully upon her ears, or sunlight so blinded and sickened her. As she turned to cross the meadow towards home, a stupid languor overcame her, and her tired limbs refused to help her forward. She caught sight of a sunburned freckled face peering kindly at her over a fence, then blindly throwing out both hands towards their owner, fell to the ground.

If Hilda had but known it, another heart had been aching in unison with her own that summer. Blinded by her sufferings, she had failed to note the hopeless love every day apparent in Ben Arnold's honest face. He leaped the fence now, and took the little form and plain face to his heart. To him she was more beautiful than the angels, and twice as dear, but he only pressed one of her small brown hands to his lips, and then hurried with his burden home.

Miss Van Cortland loved her liberty, and in spite of entreaties, protestations of endless love, and recriminations upon Trenholm's part, she was still unmarried. She loved him as much as it was in her selfish nature to love anybody, but she believed in the old couplet:

"Always to court, and never to wed,
Is the happiest life that ever was led,"

and, as her means were ample, and Trenholm ready to marry her at a moment's notice, she was in no haste to change her condition.

Trenholm lived in a fever of impatience, one day desiring the wedding, and wishing the whole thing over, the next dreading it with a loathing unutterable. In the latter frame of mind he accompanied Miss Van Cortland to a party one evening. His courtship had grown a decided bore, and he often doubted whether the play were worth the candle.

As he entered the crowded rooms he noted an unusual stir among the regular society stand-bys. Mark Eggleston, who made it a point to follow every new belle

with a zeal worthy of a letter-carrier, hurried by with unusual haste.

"What is on the tapis now, Mark?" questioned Trenholm.

"O, a regular out and outer. We've combined the two desirable requisites, at last, old boy. Wealthy as Croesus—beautiful as an angel. By-by—I am in for the glide. She waltzes like—"

Comparisons failed him, and he waved his hand in an expressive way as he left. A moment later he was whirling down the long room with a mass of blue silk and dark flowing hair in his arms. At least that was all Trenholm noted of the lady's appearance as they glided by.

Miss Van Cortland, in the meantime, had condescended to gossip with a dowager, who had four unmarried daughters, and was the natural enemy of anything in the shape of a young and pretty woman, respecting the *debutante*. She learned from this reliable and unprejudiced source that the new sensation was a small dark little thing, quite homely, but very forward, and consequently taking with the men. As for money, she had that, she believed, but there were many quiet steady girls in that very room who would make far better wives, if men were not such fools as to follow every bold woman who made her appearance.

This last was intended for Trenholm's ears. That gentleman acquiesced with a courtly bow, and said something about the charm of beauty unadorned, in reference to her oldest and scraggiest daughter, a hopeless wall-flower, who stood near; made some appropriate remark respecting the uncertainty of riches, etc., etc.

Just then Egleston and his partner, flushed and breathless, stopped in front of them. Egleston purposely avoided introducing the lady to any of his envious male friends, and placed her where Trenholm could have a full view of her stylish dress and sweet face. The dowager was right; she was a dark little thing, but she was not homely. There was something about her which went beyond mere form or feature, an indefinable charm of voice and manner. Her countenance became beautiful in animation, and her slight figure, draped in rich silk and lace, produced the effect of height.

Trenholm gave one swift glance, and then, forgetful of Miss Van Cortland, sprang eagerly forward.

"Little Hilda"—in a pleased whisper—"can it be?"

He knew her, then, in spite of outward changes. He asked eagerly for the next waltz, but was obliged to be content with a promise for the third. Egleston glowered at him, and Miss Van Cortland was too politic to appear to notice his only too evident agitation. Only Hilda Grenville, the same little Hilda as of old, in spite of suddenly acquired riches, showed no emotion.

Truly the old romance of a summer had not left its mark upon the simple country girl's heart, as he had fondly hoped. The old tenderness came back to Guy Trenholm's heart that night, but, alas, for him! the story of his love was told too late.

Deep intense feeling stamped his words with truth, yet they awakened no response in Hilda Grenville's heart. He never could resurrect the love he himself had consigned to its grave three years before.

"Why, Hilda, why will you not pity me? I will never marry Miss Van Cortland, and I love only you, have loved only you ever since we parted. Can you not give me a little hope? Not now do I dare ask for your love, but some day, when I can come to you free; when I have done something to win your esteem."

"I will not deny, Mr. Trenholm, that once you were very dear to me. I loved you with a devotion I have since wondered at. God alone knows how I suffered after you left me, but he gave me strength to outlive it, and has since blessed me with the devotion of a noble man, a man whom I can truly say has my entire love and trust. I am to be married in a few weeks to Dr. Arnold. Take me to him, please."

With white set face, he gave her his arm, and reentered the ballroom. A tall fine-looking man met them.

"Well, Hilda, growing tired of all this show?"

"No, Ben, but ready to go if you wish it. I forgot," with pretty self-reproach, "how stupid all this must be to you. Haven't you really danced once?"

"O, I managed to worry through one or two quadrilles with some wall-flowers, but country breeding is not conducive to gracefulness."

With a last mad effort to win his past power over her, Trenholm bent and whispered:

"You will kill me with your coldness,

Hilda! Give me one little word. May I come to your hotel to-morrow?"

"There is no such thing as to-morrow," laughed Hilda. Then dropping her trifling tone, and marking with pity the misery in his face, she added, gently:

"I am sorry, Guy, as sorry for you now as I was for myself so long ago. I have outlived it; you will, too, in a few months. Good-by, and forget the past."

Forget the past! Could he forget, when

he had lost by his love of gold the woman whom he felt in every fibre of his being should have been his wife?

For pique he had first sought Hilda Grenville, and by his selfishness had nearly wrecked her life; and for the same reason he led the lovely Miss Van Cortland to the altar three months later, upon hearing of the marriage of Dr. and Mrs. Arnold, and their subsequent departure for Europe.

FORTY-FIVE PUNCHEONS OF RUM.

BY W. H. MACY.

“MANY years ago,” said old Baxter, our sailmaker, who had been called upon either to sing a song or spin a yarn, “I drifted down to Nantucket, and for the first time shipped in a whaler.”

“*How many years ago?*” queried one of the saucy boys from that classic island.

“More than you know anything about, for it was long before any of you youngsters were born. You want to catch me tripping, don’t you? Can you remember the old brig *Norway*?”

“No; but I have heard my father tell of her, for he was in her two or three voyages.”

“Very likely; and it may be that your father and I were shipmates. Now don’t interrupt me too often, or I’ll put a stopper on, and leave you to guess at the story. Well, I shipped in the *Norway*, fitted out for a whaling cruise not to exceed eight months in length. Our outfit was figured mighty close, even for that short time. I should judge that if she got one large sperm whale, as oil was pretty high in price at that time, she would have paid expenses, and left the vessel clear to her owners. Well, we sailed in the fall of the year, just after the breaking up of a tremendous gale, in which many vessels had been wrecked, all along the Atlantic coast. We had taken the right slant in sailing just after the gale was over, and had a fine run across the Gulf Stream. When five days at sea we fell in with the wreck of a large schooner, with both masts gone, water-logged and abandoned. Her counter-board was so deep under water that we could not make out her name or port of register, and there was nothing on board or about her that would help us to make out who she was or where she hailed from. Having very fine weather, we lay by her all the next day, and by cutting away a part of the deck and rigging up some shears, we were so lucky as to get out forty-five puncheons of rum, and transfer it all on board the *Norway*. Here was a good beginning for a whaling voyage! and, as we were so short a distance from home, the old man declared we might as well return, land the rum, and take a fresh departure. The liquor was of excellent qual-

ity, and the marks on the casks indicated that the schooner was from a West India port. She had also sugar and molasses among her cargo, but this was deeper down in the hold, and, of course, much damaged. The wind freshened in the night, and the next morning it was so rugged that we gave up working any more on the wreck, contenting ourselves with the rum. We hauled sharp on a bowline, heading as nearly as we could for the port we had so lately left.

“In those days rum was in more common use by everybody than it now is—though I have my doubts whether there was any more drunkenness. We had our grog twice a day in the *Norway*, as, indeed, all seamen did then; but this was always under regulated allowance, and two glasses were not enough to do any harm. But now Captain Bunker was afraid he had an elephant on his hands. There was not room for all the puncheons below, as the vessel had all her stores on board, and was pretty well filled up. So there were about fifteen of them lashed along the rail, some on each side, above deck, which made us pretty well lumbered up. If the crew got a free swing at the rum he would be sure to have trouble, he knew; and to come on the coast of America at that season of the year with all hands drunk was not just the right thing for any prudent mariner. He could trust his mate—who was also a born Nantucketer—to look out for the casks during his watch on deck, and see that no one tapped them. But his second officer was an Irishman, and a stranger to the old man, who knew little more of him than the fact that he was half drunk when he was shipped, though he had the reputation of being a very good whaler. So Barzillai Bunker, who was a fair specimen of the Nantucket Quaker sailor of that day, determined to stand a watch himself, and so look after the puncheons of rum and the second mate at the same time. He accordingly took charge of the starboard watch that night, and some of my shipmates, who had counted upon Mr. Farrell’s love of ‘the crater,’ and proposed to have it all their own way, found their calculations all astray. Friend Bunker was so vigilant

and active that he appeared to be on every part of the deck at one and the same time. The gimlet and bucket were kept in readiness waiting for a slant, but no slant seemed to occur; and the port watch was no more fortunate than we were; for Mr. Swain had a young boatsteerer who was quite as vigilant as himself, and quite as determined to see the rum landed intact at Nantucket, though he made enemies of every man before the mast.

"How to circumvent the watchful guardians of the liquor was now the great question; for some of our old salts were determined to have enough of it for one grand blow-out. Two or three days and nights passed, and we were again entering the Gulf Stream on our return passage, and might at any moment expect heavy weather, such as the old Norway was none too well fitted to encounter, even with all hands sober and at their posts. The gimlet, spile and bucket were held constantly in readiness, and the wished-for opportunity arrived at last.

"A sail was in sight just at sundown, headed down across our track, running free, and evidently an outward-bounder. She edged off her course, as if she was desirous of speaking us, but it was not until it was quite dark that she approached within hailing distance. The old man went aft to the taffrail with his trumpet, but did not forget to give a cautionary word to the second mate, who continued walking amidships among the puncheons of rum. It would never do for any of us to attempt the feat of tapping a cask right under his eye; but word was passed to some of the watch below, who were in waiting for it. A little engineering had been managed the day previous; and it was ascertained by measurement that by boring upward through the deck at a certain point, the gimlet, if it were long enough, would pierce the head of a certain puncheon. To have done this in broad daylight would have involved discovery, as there must be a great deal of waste, and the leakage on deck would have been perceived at once. But now, if ever, was the time, and old Bill Lambert, taking a boy with him to hold the lamp and assist, went through into the hold, the two crawling on their knees upon the top tier of casks. There was just room to do this, and that only for a certain distance; while to get at the rum, which was stowed in the

hold away aft, was simply impossible. Even as it was, it was a very cramped-up place where old Bill had to lie on his back and work his gimlet. The boy holding the light was in a still more uncomfortable position, if possible. All this I saw as I ran down into the hold for a minute, and peeped in through the bulkhead. Bill was working away with a will, sweating and grunting; and as I thought of what might be the consequences of his success, I was almost tempted to turn informer. But I could not do this without its being known to my shipmates; and, boy as I then was, my fate would be a hard one if I were caught blowing upon them and spoiling the drunken spree which they intended to enjoy. So I dared not do otherwise than hold my peace, especially as I saw one of the veteran salts of my own watch stood over the fore-scuttle, keeping an eye continually upon me.

"Bill at last succeeded in working a hole through the tough wood, and the rum began to flow down through the deck, though of course much more was lost by running away above. A tin pot was ready to catch the drippings, for there was not room to work the bucket in the cramped space. Everything was now going on swimmingly, and my shipmates were smacking their lips in anticipation of the treat they were soon to enjoy.

"*'I say!'* called old Tony the shipkeeper, down the scuttle, in a loud impressive whisper. *'Tell Bill to be careful of the light!'*

"The caution was well-timed, for this was really the principal risk. The rum was splashing and spilling everywhere, outside the tin pot as well as into it. And you will understand, shipmates, that this was rum; it hadn't been deaconed or doctored, and was no such stuff as is now sold under *'probitory'* law, which will answer to put out fire with.

"*'Boy, come on deck!'* said old Tony to me; and up I went. Captain Bunker had come forward again, the strange ship having passed on out of hail, and nearly out of sight in the darkness. As the deck was wet under and about the puncheons, the leakage of the rum was not apparent to the sense of sight, but the old man's smellers were sensitive enough, and he soon began to sniff and peer about, until he was satisfied that one of the casks was not all right.

"*'Here! this way, the watch!'* Mr. Farrell, let 'em cast off the lashings and heave

down this puncheon, here! It's leaking all over the deck. Down with it, quick!

"The lashings were cleared away, and several pairs of horny hands seized the chimes. But the spile which was pushed through the deck from below offered some resistance, as it pinned the cask down! Another heave, harder than before, the spile broke, and down came the puncheon suddenly upon its bilge, nearly crushing me before I could back out of the way.

"But at this moment a most piercing scream was heard from under the deck, such as I hope never to hear again. There was a rush up the fore-castle ladder, and that cry, so appalling to the sailor at all times—'Fire!' Dark smoke rolled up the scuttle, and out through its folds poured half-suffocated men, gasping for dear life as they reached the fresh air. Barzillai Bunker understood the whole matter and the imminent danger without waiting for words of explanation.

"'Off with those main hatches!' he shouted. 'Water! water! Form a rank here, and pass down water! Shut on the fore-scuttle! Hard up your helm, there! Square the afteryards, and swing her right off before it!'

"When men are working for their lives they will work with a will; and every nerve and muscle on board was strained that night to obey the captain's orders. The rum-drinking wretches who had brought us into this peril now felt that all their lives depended upon him as the master-spirit. The flames under the deck had gained some headway, but luckily there were no casks of liquor stowed below forward of the main hatches; otherwise our fate would have been sealed. The fight in the choking air of the hold was a fearful one, but we conquered at last, and saved the vessel. But the dead bodies of old Bill Lambert and the poor lad Jake were dragged out, charred and blackened, striking a chill of terror to the most hardened hearts among us. They had been overwhelmed so suddenly by the flames while in their cramped position, that they had no chance for escape, and had perished miserably, long before any aid could reach them.

"It was a sad hour when the mutilated bodies were launched into the sea, and one might suppose that the warning would have been sufficient to make every man of that crew swear off from drinking liquor for the

remainder of his life; but such was not the fact. Sailors, it seems to me, are much like children; these sad things seem to bear very heavily upon them for the moment, but the impression doesn't wear well.

"That night we caught the Gulf Stream weather, butt-end foremost, and a heavy gale came on that tried the old Norway for her very life. We made all as snug as we could, and hove her to under a couple of 'three-cornered scrapers,' making a dead drift off to the southward; but the sea rose to such a fearful height that she labored and strained frightfully, and there was plenty of exercise for us at the pumps, with lifelines stretched athwart the decks for our safety. In the middle watch a sea boarded us amidships, breaking off four or five stanchions, and a part of the main rail with them; so that the puncheons of rum were all adrift; and then followed as frightful a scene as I ever want to witness as long as I live. The heavy casks were dashing with tremendous fury here, there and everywhere, and completely took charge of the deck amidships, for all we could do was to give them room and get out of their way. But the poor second mate, who was near the mainmast, overseeing the men at the pumps, when the sea broke on board, was not so fortunate as the rest of us. A puncheon of rum 'fetched away' upon him, jamming him against the mast, and his crushed body was swept away over the lee rail by the wash of the sea, after its first shock was spent. I caught a glimpse of it as it surged past the lee main rigging, where I had made my first jump for safety, and the memory of it still haunts me!

"But again old Barzillai Bunker came out strong, as he always did in any emergency. A quiet plodding Quaker he seemed to be so long as all went smooth; but get him in a tight place, and he showed the real stuff that he was made of. He seemed to be everywhere that night, rousing us all from our paralysis of fear, pushing casks overboard to get them out of the way, and with powerful blows of his axe knocking in the heads of others as they drove past him on the heavy rolls of the old brig. By his efforts and his influence upon the rest of us, we were again saved from the immediate danger; and all of us breathed easier when we saw the last heavy puncheon forced clear of the vessel, and nothing to endanger life and limb but a few loose

staves of those which had been stoven to pieces.

"But during all this the water had gained so much in the pump-well that we were now threatened with a new danger. The strain of the heavy sea shipped had increased the old brig's leaks, and in consequence of the broken stanchions, a great volume of water found its way down through the plankshear. There was no hope for us but to keep her on the same tack, and all hands buckle to the pumps. Our strength was much reduced, for, besides the loss of the second mate, old Bill and Jake, we had two others disabled for the time by severe hurts received while fighting to get clear of the terrible rum puncheons. But the only wonder to me is that we were not more than half of us killed in that fearful rally among those infernal casks.

"Clank! clank! the pumps were going all night, for dear life; and no man ventured to think either of sleep or dry clothing, for there was enough to do to keep our heads above water. Rum was served out to us, for the captain, like everybody else in his day, believed in it, though it was not every one that could regulate its use as he could. When daylight broke we were pretty well exhausted and worn out. The gale was moderating a little; but on sounding the hold we found there was rather more water than we noted three hours before. The leaks had gained upon us, in spite of all our efforts!

"But there was a ship to windward of us, lying to on the opposite tack. Up went our ensign, Union down, as a signal of dire distress, and eager eyes were watching its effect; for if the stranger made sail, as it

was probable he would very soon, his course on the other tack would soon carry him out of sight. We dared not go about, for if the rent in the plankshear were buried in the sea a few times by heavy lee-rolls, the brig would have gone down from under us in short order.

"Our spirits found vent in three rousing cheers when at last we saw the ship set her foresail, and fall off gradually, with her head towards us! She came down so as to hold a short parley, and, learning our situation, she came to on the same tack with us, and remained in company until the weather had moderated enough to venture to lower a boat. Until that time we labored steadily, and more hopefully than before, at the pumps. But this is a kind of work that no sailor likes. It is not only hard and exhausting, but there is too much sameness about it—it's too much like sawing cordwood or turning grindstone; and glad enough were we when the moment arrived to abandon the old Norway, and take ourselves, with little more than what we stood in, on board the British ship 'Stromness.'

"Before we had passed out of view of the Norway, she had sunk so that her deck amidships was under water, and she lay wallowing, a helpless wreck in the trough of the sea. Of course the thirty puncheons of rum which were stowed under deck went down with her. Whether anybody else ever 'wrecked' her, or ever picked up any of the rum casks that were swept off her deck, I never knew; but if so, I wish them joy of all the satisfaction they may have got out of any part of those forty-five puncheons of rum; for they brought nothing but death and disaster to that old brig and to all on board."

GERALD'S TEMPTATION.

BY M. T. CALDOR.

CHAPTER I.

"THEY'RE as different as light and darkness, or winter and summer. To this day, I can't make it seem natural that they should be father and son."

Mrs. Murdoch, the housekeeper at Wharnley Lodge, paused from her steady sewing, at the close of this little speech, and, with the shining point of her needle poised in somewhat ominous proximity to her queer little turn-up nose, gave two or three significant nods, by way of giving due emphasis to her speech.

Her cheery gray eyes were fixed away from the comfortable sitting-room, out through the cool drapery of vine branches festooning the window by which she sat, upon the smooth green lawn, where two figures were pacing, side by side.

A tall, angular, shambling-gaited man was the elder, with a cold, dry, rasping look about him, which inevitably warded off, as with an icy hand, the gazer's hope of sympathy, or fellowship, or cordiality—anything, in short, except the strictest justice.

His very flesh seemed withered and dried upon his bones—worn, perhaps, by the incessant friction of the restless, uneasy, discontented spirit which looked out warily from the small, deep-set, and piercing black eyes. Short thick masses of iron-gray hair stood out on either side of the tall peaked forehead; the nose was hooked, like the beak of a bird of prey; the lips straight, grim, resolute. An iron man, one who moved straight on his course, and levelled whatever obstacles lay in his way. For this trait, one indeed could not look upon him without involuntary respect. But affection—it was a very absurdity to couple the thought of anything endearing with the idea of Squire James Wharnley, the wealthy retired barrister, whose subtle penetration and dogged obstinacy in following up a clue had given him a fame, which, years back, had been almost sufficient guaranty for whatever case he undertook.

He still held a prominent position in the county, notwithstanding he had retired from the bar, and his sharp wits and keen

insight into human nature gave him a high reputation for wisdom and shrewdness, which were often called into use for public matters. For this, and for the sake of the generous fortune he had amassed, he commanded, as I said before, the respect and esteem of the neighborhood.

He had married, somewhat late in life, a timid, shrinking orphan, who had been left as a ward to his care, by a client for whom he had gained an important lawsuit. Acquaintances had marvelled at this singular match; but no one who had witnessed the quiet but invincible control which the guardian of her property exercised over the timid, yielding girl, wondered that blue-eyed Mary Wilson could not find courage enough to refuse the offer of a suitor twice her years in age. She did not live long after the marriage. She had never been gay and blithe, like other girls; but after she became Mrs. Wharnley she was still more quiet, and meek, and grave. She glided around upon her household duties as noiselessly as a ghost; and she grew as pale, and almost as impalpable. Day by day wasting slowly and surely; "never seeing a well day," as Mrs. Murdoch phrased it, from the time of her son's birth, she only lived to see the wee white feet of the baby boy go toddling over the house with a sturdy strength which mocked her own feeble footfalls, and then the doting mother's fond eyes closed softly and forever, for the earthly life, upon the sweet cherub face of her darling. Closed contentedly, too. The warm-hearted housekeeper would tell of it with an awed look in her eyes, a quaver in her voice—just how before she sank away, the dying mother crossed her two wasted hands upon the curly head lying against her pillow, and whispered, softly:

"It is better so, my lamb. Your mother is too weak, and timid, and doubting, to be a sure guide for such tender feet. She will kneel in the heavenly courts, and pray for you there, and watch over and guard you from evil, by the wondrous spell of that unseen land."

And, as if beneath some such tender benign influence, Gerald Wharnley had grown

up into a handsome, manly, generous-hearted youth, gay of heart and blithe of tongue, the favorite and delight of whatever circle he entered.

This son of a stern, cold, hard man, a tyrant in disposition, a selfish miser, except as the fear of the world's contempt restrained him, and of a timid, melancholy, spiritless mother, grew up a wonder and marvel to all who had known the parents intimately. Free-hearted and generous to a fault, quick in sympathy and affection, frank, unreserved, buoyant, Gerald was one of the most delightful companions, the most valued and trusted friends.

It was he, walking now beside his father, with that elastic step, that graceful erect form, that handsome happy face and cheery smile. A contrast indeed!

Mrs. Murdoch returned to her seam, and continued, with a little sigh:

"It is a mercy, indeed, for us all that the young master has pleasanter ways than his father! Dear heart! how lonesome it is when he's away to the college! and how we all brighten up when the vacation is coming! There isn't one of us but would do anything for him; and as for me, I think I should break my heart if any harm happened to him. But then you know it's rather different with me. It almost makes me a kind of mother, that promise I made to the poor dying woman to watch over him, and save him from harm as much as lay in my power. Bless his honest heart! it's only a pleasant straight course he's taken, so far. Everybody has loved him and cared for him, and he has had no mind to walk in evil ways. I own I've feared for him, since he went to college. It's bad doings and wild actions he must see there; and he's so free-hearted, and so ready to follow anybody's lead for a little sport, that I didn't know but we should hear of him in mischief; but it's only good we've heard thus far."

"I have heard that the young men there were very wild, and many of them recklessly unprincipled," answered her companion, for the first time interrupting the house-keeper's garrulity.

The speaker, a clear-eyed, sweet-looking young girl, daintily robed in a white cambric morning-dress with pink ribbon trimmings, was looking thoughtfully through the open window, to the pacing figures on the lawn, and in a moment she added:

"But one cannot think of Mr. Gerald's going wrong, with so wise and sagacious a guide as his father."

Mrs. Murdoch shook her head, slowly.

"There's where the trouble will come from, if ever Mr. Gerald's dear careless feet make a slip. You see they are so different. The master will never understand the temptations before Gerald, because to his disposition they were not in the least enticing. There is an honorable generosity towards his friends, too, which may lead our dear boy into trouble, and even disgrace. And Squire Wharnley is a terrible man when he is aroused, Miss Ada. He is one of your iron men, thinking more of meting out just the law to the sinful, than of being tender and forbearing, lest he drive the erring deeper into the pit. He is strictly just himself, one must own that. He keeps to the letter of kind and upright dealing, but O, he woefully misses the spirit, sometimes! After all, the blessed New Testament shows us, better than justice is mercy, and charity, and love."

Good Mrs. Murdoch laid down her needle, folded up the napkin she had been hemming, and looked over her spectacles with a gentle smile, into the fair face before her.

"You are right, dear Mrs. Murdoch," answered Ada Willoughby, with sudden fervor. "What a dreary desert would this world become, if only Justice, with her unerring but oftentimes pitiless balance, reigned supreme! We are so weak and sinful, the very best of us, it is hard, indeed, if we refuse sympathy to those who fall into the snares and pitfalls of the world."

"Squire Wharnley will do it. He would turn Gerald away like a stray dog, if once he disobeyed his commands, or in any way excited his displeasure. That is why I tremble over it so much, whenever I get to fancying such a woeful happening as that Gerald should get mixed up in any wild frolic."

"What! do you mean that he could be so inexorable with this only child of his? O Mrs. Murdoch, I cannot credit you! He must be very fond of his son. Why, he is all he has in the world."

"He is as fond of him as lies in his nature. He is proud of Gerald, beside; but he will not bear with any grave fault of his, no, not a single day or hour. I know my master well, Miss Ada. I have lived with him ever since Mrs. Wharnley was taken

poorly, and that is twenty-one years this next spring."

Miss Willoughby caught her breath a little nervously. "You quite frighten me, Mrs. Murdoch. I must be wary myself, for he has unlimited control of my movements until I am twenty-one, and that is a long way off. How much sorrow it might cause me, if, by mischance, I offended him! My poor father had the utmost confidence in him. I know how much he admired and respected him."

"I beg your pardon, Miss Ada. I forgot all about that he was your guardian. You see it is such a new thing, your coming here. But there's no fear for you. In the first place, how could you offend him? And then besides, he could not make a beggar of you. He must fulfil his trust as guardian to the property, if not to you; and when you're free, it will be yours, beyond anybody's meddling. Now it isn't so with Master Gerald. His poor weak mother gave her property all to her husband, when he asked for it, to make some great investment, and there it is, where her son can never have it, if his father has a mind to keep it from him. Don't fret over what I have said, Miss Ada. There's not the first reason for you to be troubled; and I ought to be ashamed for being such a dismal croaker just now, when the old place is brightened up by two gay young faces, like yours and Master Gerald's. It's a rare treat, indeed. Ah! Master Gerald has spied you out; he is coming this way. Say now, Miss Ada, in the fine city where you have been living, saw you ever a pleasanter-looking young man than our young master?"

Ada Willoughby laughed merrily at this appeal, and, as presently the handsome boyish face was thrust into the window—the sunny blue eyes and smiling red lips merry and gay enough to have answered for a portrait of Alcibiades, fitly framed for such a presentation in the cool green border of vine leaves—she blushed a little at the honest housekeeper's home question.

"Miss Willoughby, how can you sit in this close room of Mrs. Murdoch's when it is such a delicious day? All Nature is gladsome, and calling everybody to come and join her glee. What will you have, a canter on the pony, a ride in the open carriage, or a nice cool row down the lake? I am at your service, on condition that you

will come out of doors, and promise to be happy."

"O, the lake, by all means! unless, indeed, it will be tiresome for you to row."

"What are these stout arms of mine good for, if not to do a little work now and then? Rowing is my delight. Don't you know the fellows in my boat boast of my stroke? We have famous rows, we collegians."

"I'll come in a moment. I am sure I shall enjoy it beyond all the others."

"Don't come to the boat in that snowy dress, I beg of you. It will spoil my comfort to be obliged to watch the spray from the oar. I won't promise not to give you a little shower now and then, and you know it's only the lilies can stand the pelting of the water and keep fresh and unsullied."

"I've a mind to try it. You may splash to your heart's content; there's no harm to come of it, except delivering the dress a little sooner to Lucille's getting up, and it always comes out from her adroit French fingers more exquisite than at first."

She disappeared, and the young man, leaning against the window-frame, continued talking cheerily to the housekeeper.

"But, Mr. Gerald," interrupted she, "this is a nice sweet young lady, this new ward of your father's; don't you think so?"

"A very pleasant girl, Mrs. Murdoch. I was greatly relieved that she did not turn out a demure, frightened, lachrymose schoolgirl, nor a stiff solemn prig. The poor thing will have a lonesome time of it when I am gone, unless you or my father turn hoydenish, and give her a romp now and then; an unlikely relief, I'm afraid."

"Ah, she's just as merry-hearted as you, Master Gerald. It makes me ache, sometimes, thinking how hard it will be for such blithe spirits to come into the shadow."

The young man shrugged his shoulders, and made a comical grimace.

"Does the earth refuse this glorious sunshine, because by-and-by are coming the cold rains and the drifting snows? I won't go ahead, to meet trouble half way. I'll be happy while I can, thinking there's none in sight."

"The Lord send it may always be as bright for you!" murmured the old housekeeper, with dimmed eyes, as the youth turned hastily to meet the graceful girl who came tripping lightly down the steps of the side door.

She had thrown a thin sea-green shawl around her white dress, and tied on a straw hat fluttering with green ribbons. The shining waves of hair beneath the jaunty straw brim, the clear untroubled eyes, the delicately-flushed cheeks, and the cool white cambric dress, with here and there a glimpse of the pink bows, made a pretty picture, as Gerald fixed her comfortably in the stern of his little boat.

"I declare, Miss Willoughby, you're not so much unlike the water-lily, after all, with that glossy green shawl, and the white dress, and the little twinkle of rose color. I assure you, you look exceedingly nice in my boat," said he, as he pushed off from the shore.

Ada Willoughby smiled in response. She did not express aloud her inward comment, that the litho, erect, graceful figure at the oars, with its eager animated face, was, in its way, a picture for which she could find no symbol grand enough.

It was a happy day for these fresh young spirits. Mrs. Murdoch watched them from the drawing-room window, coming up the walk on their return. Squire Wharnley, catching her pleased smile, bent forward from his newspaper, and followed her eyes, and a thoughtful look settled upon his face.

Gerald had her hat and shawl on his arm, and was looking eagerly into her face, which was turned toward him, bright with smiling attention. Their mingling voices, clear and musical, floated forward before their lagging footsteps.

The grim master of Wharnley Lodge watched them closely, conscious, meanwhile, of Mrs. Murdoch's curious observation.

"Well," said he, as if in answer to a question of hers, startling the worthy woman so that she nearly dropped the picture she was dusting, "I suppose it is natural they should take to each other. I have no objection. She seems a good sensible girl. Her property will treble under my management, before she comes of age, and it is already a snug fortune."

Mrs. Murdoch smiled with an air of great relief. Her master turned, with a wonderfully happy face, to meet the young people. It was only a continuation of their sunshine, and they entered merrily.

Six months later, and before one of the university buildings, in the quaint pretty town toward which goes the yearning thought of many and many a famous man, as he recalls the pleasant memories of his *Alma Mater*, was gathered a little knot of young men, conversing in low and suppressed tones, but with eyes and gestures plainly betraying deep excitement. A tall sedate man came slowly down the street, and the young men eyed him anxiously.

"It's all up with us, boys," said a blue-eyed youth, tossing back a curly mass of fair hair from his forehead. "I can see well enough, by the old fellow's face, what has been the verdict. Didn't you see how black a frown drew down those bushy eyebrows of his? We've all got to march, that's positive. If we don't get expelled instead of suspended, we may count it clear gain."

"Confound their sanctimonious gruffness!" growled another. "What do they expect? that young fellows like us are to go without any fun, whilst digging into their musty old books?"

Gerald Wharnley had stood a little apart from the others, and though he had given keen attention to their conversation, he had not joined in it until now.

"It was miserable fun, MacPherson. I don't need this forlorn *denouement* to prove it to me. If it hadn't been that your wine took away all my good sense, I should have been ashamed at the very idea of it. My bitterest humiliation comes from the contempt I feel for my own folly. Don't try to excuse the disgraceful affair in my presence," said he, in a bitter tone.

"Ho, ho! Here's Wharnley, ready for the penitent's seat at a confessional. I wish the worshipful faculty might put upon him all the punishment, since he is so ready to acknowledge his guilt," sneered the previous speaker. "For my part, I am not aware of transgressing the old customs in the least. Didn't we stand our chance of hazing, when we were freshmen? and haven't we a right to take our share of the fun, when the turn comes to us? Besides, we have only served the poor little country sprig a good turn. We've taken out of him, not only the self-esteem he brought from the village academy, but the verdancy of his rustic home."

"For shame, MacPherson!" returned

Gerald, indignantly. Don't you know we may thank Heaven's mercy that the life was not taken out of him, too? He's been raving all night in a delirious fever, and the doctor says it is an even chance whether his delicate constitution will get through it or not."

Something of the horror of his tone was reflected on the faces of the thoughtless young men, who eyed each other ruefully.

"You don't say so, Gerald!" "By George! that's too bad!" "It's a bad business, that's a fact!" was echoed around him.

Gerald Wharnley's voice trembled, as he replied, "I know it is so, because I have been taking care of him all night. His mother has just arrived. I tell you, boys if you had seen her anguish when he did not know her, in answer to her piteous entreaties, you would agree to the worst the faculty can say about this accursed hazing."

"Pooh! the fellow was sick before, I haven't a doubt of it," said MacPherson, the only one who still attempted to brave out the affair. "I don't see what it has to do with us, because the fever has taken hold of him."

"It has everything to do with us," replied Gerald, in a deep stern voice. "It is the result of our wanton cruelty—the natural effect of fright and that icy cold bath, upon a delicate constitution. If he dies, I, for one, shall feel myself his murderer. And I was not the ringleader, MacPherson. I think I had wit enough to remonstrate against the bath."

A rueful silence fell upon the young men, and one by one they separated, and went away to their rooms, terribly disconcerted by this unlooked-for result of a night's frolic. To be called together again in a few hours, to undergo the dreaded ordeal of the president's severe reproof, and learn of their suspension from the college.

It was very little like the hilarious, frolicsome, half-crazed band which had made their dreaded raid on the quiet room of the freshman—this slow, crestfallen, rueful procession which emerged from the president's room. A few made feeble attempts at nonchalance and indifference, but only MacPherson, a fiery-spirited, indolent young Southerner, really felt the punishment undeserved, and no inward accusations to render the catastrophe still more intolerable.

"It will save us a deal of tagging and hard work, lads," said he, with a careless whistle. "I'm off for livelier scenes than this. Thanks to all these wise professors, I shan't have to touch a book for a good while."

Gerald Wharnley looked after him as he went swaggering down the street, and his lip trembled as he muttered, fiercely:

"And I have allowed a heartless wretch like that to lead me into a course which has tarnished my good name, nearly ruined my prospects, and for aught I know, endangered all the hopes I hold dearest! O fool and blind! But it is a lesson I shall never forget. What will my father say? How will Ada receive this humiliating announcement?"

He wrung his hands, and, pulling his cap over his eyes, darted down a narrow alley, to escape meeting one of his acquaintances, who was coming toward him with a cheery genial smile. The latter followed him, however, and calling after him, compelled him to turn reluctantly toward him.

"A letter for you, Wharnley. It has just arrived, by private hands. From home, I presume. Don't look so ghastly, man! You'll get the governor's lecture, no doubt; but I'll wager it ends with the paternal blessing. Why, there isn't one of the others stands half your chance. An only son, the sole heir to a goodly estate—of course you'll be forgiven at once."

Gerald Wharnley shut down his teeth savagely against his whitening lip, to keep back a groan.

"Don't talk, just now, Brown. I know you mean the best, but I can't bear it," cried he, hastily snatching away the letter, and glancing shiveringly at his father's bold familiar writing.

"I don't want to torment you, Gerald, but you are taking this thing to heart in an entirely uncalled-for way. You couldn't look any more guilty, if you had committed murder."

"It might have been that. I know, now, just how wicked and cruel was our frenzied sport with that poor fellow. He's better this morning; I thank Heaven for that!"

"His mother is poor, too, I understand. We're going to start a subscription to pay her expenses and the doctor's bill."

"There's no need. I emptied my purse into her lap last night; it was enough for all her needs, I think. Now let me go."

Holding the still unopened letter in his hand, Gerald Wharnley turned away, and walked slowly on towards a little grove at the end of the village. Once safe in that solitude, he threw himself upon the mossy ground, and tore open the seal. He glanced over the bold handwriting, as if to gain some hint of its purport, and then beginning again, read every word slowly and firmly.

There was less agitation in his face, now that the blow had actually fallen. A certain firm determined resignation took away the careless boyish look, but left a grave manliness scarcely less becoming. He folded the letter deliberately.

"Well, my forebodings were not without cause. He is fearfully incensed. That hateful newspaper paragraph has made for me just the mischief I expected. I cannot wonder that he is indignant to see my name printed there in full, as a malicious, willful, disgraced rowdy. I cannot blame him for his anger; but it is my first offence, and he might take my promise that it will be my last, instead of turning me so relentlessly from his home and affections. I cannot believe that he will continue so angry when he has received my letter, telling him just the truth of the whole matter. Ada will intercede for me, unless—O, I dare not picture her grief and resentment! I will try to be calm and hopeful. I will wait till they receive my letters; then I can decide upon my future course."

Saying which, with the most composed manner he had been able to assume since the disgraceful frolic, the young man rose to his feet, and walked slowly back to his boarding-place. On his way he met the president of the college, who paused, and, seeing his shame-flushed face and drooping head, said, kindly:

"We are all very sorry for you, Wharnley; not only because you are so general a favorite, but that it is your first offence. But the affair is of too grave a character to be passed by. I trust the lesson will be salutary for you, and that you will come back after this suspension better fitted to resist the temptations these wild young men can offer to your genial, social disposition. I have written as favorably as I could to your father."

"Thank you, sir. Indeed, this lesson is bitter enough to last me a lifetime."

"The poor lad's mother is full of pity

for you, while she has only anger for the others. You have promptly acknowledged your fault, and done your best toward repairing the mischief. I wish we could have spared you the suspension; but after that hasty article in the daily paper, it would look partial and ill-advised."

"I deserve it," answered Gerald, ruefully, "and I bear it as a merited penance, if only my father will forgive me."

"I will write again, as favorably as I feel toward you."

"You are very kind. I will never try your patience again, if I return to the college."

"Of course you will return."

Gerald did not express the conviction which weighed heavily on his mind, that this assertion was a hopeless one, but passed on.

Another day, and his doubts were all put at rest, by the certainty of his doom. His father sent back the letter he had written, with the seal unbroken.

"You are no son of mine, henceforward," wrote he. "As you have sowed, so may you reap. As guardian of Miss Ada Willoughby, I likewise forbid all communication with her. What debts you have contracted before this date, I shall pay, as becomes an honorable man of business. After this, I shall not be responsible for even the crust which keeps you from starving. Your name is a forbidden sound in this house."

"Pitiless, inexorable!" muttered Gerald, as his eye flashed, and his pallid cheek took a momentary glow of indignation. "Has he no particle of affection? no human commiseration for a soul thus set adrift from everything that can hold it away from the whirlpool of sin? Truly I am now to commence the world on my own account. I have nothing to aid me, my purse is empty. I am glad that poor widow had the money while it was in my power to give it. I will not even have his name, since he holds that my actions sully disgrace upon it."

He had never looked handsomer, more like a hero than now, when he stood with folded arms, glittering eyes and pale stern face.

"This grievous reverse shall not crush me. I will show him that there is the spirit of a man within me. I am young and strong. Shall I bewail this experience like a weak woman? It is a dreary thing

to stand alone; but I think there is that within me can rise above despondency and face it manfully. There is but one course before me; I must find some situation in which to earn my daily bread. I must go away from here at once. O, if there had only come one single encouraging word from Ada!"

He smothered the groan which accompanied the last words, and walked to and fro fiercely.

"She forsakes me, too. She joins my father in his resentment, or I should have received a line, a word, in answer to that appealing letter of mine. So perish all my fondest hopes! Beggared in fortune, exiled from home, wrecked in love! And yet, I will not be crushed. There is that within me shall rise above it all."

Clinging almost fiercely to this dauntless resolution, Gerald Wharnley went away from the pleasant little town, from the *Alma Mater* which thrust him forth, into the busy, hurrying, selfish world, to seek a place there for his young arm to work. Alack! he little dreamed of the heart-wearing, disheartening ordeal before him. He gave his name fearlessly at first, until he saw the suspicion and discouragement it produced.

"What, a son of the rich Lawyer Wharnley, and turned adrift in this style! You are no safe character for any one else to harbor, if so bad that your own father turns you off," said one after another; and turned a deaf ear to his explanations and apologies.

He soon grew weary of the fruitless attempt, and presently, though with a hot cheek and faltering voice, gave his name as Geoffrey Gerald. Then came inquiries concerning his references and abilities. He had no references. Give him a trial, and he would show what he could do, answered he, boldly. He felt the keen inquisitive eyes glancing over his tender white hands, his genteel clothing, the unmistakable look which betrays luxurious nurture and habits, and knew well enough why he received, everywhere, such persistent refusal.

If his own father turned away from his entreaties, how could he expect better of the heartless, selfish world? Before long, the proud spirit, the stout young heart, died within him. He had pawned his watch long ago; sold every little trinket, all his

superfluous clothing, and still he was without a permanent situation—only enabled, here and there, now and then, to earn a meagre pittance, wherewith to keep away the gaunt wolf of poverty. He grew reckless and bitter. In an evil hour he came across MacPherson. Gay, brilliant, lavish with the income forwarded him from the far-away cotton-fields and rice swamps of the South, the young aristocrat's company gave a sort of respectability to his appearance, which his rapidly-diminishing resources could not bestow. He was kind and generous in his ways; and poor Gerald had grown greedily hungry even for such little show of friendship as his old comrade could give. MacPherson, dully conscious of his own instrumentality in bringing about such woeful result for his companion and classmate, made a sort of protegee of him, invited him to sumptuous dinners, drove him along the race-course with his matchless horses, coaxed or bullied him to have recourse to billiards and wine, to drown his cares, and kept him near him by the oft-reiterated promise to provide him with a good situation in which he might earn an honest living. The good honest heart of the youth loathed this miserable life, yet he had no power to turn away from the only hope held out to him. Gerald was standing upon the very brink of ruin. Where was the friendly hand to snatch him back? Where, O where was the angel whisper to warn him of his fatal position?

At Wharnley Lodge the stern old father sat gloomily gloating over his own invincible rectitude, his impartial justice, his swift rebuke for evil—and at the door of a gambling-house, in the dissolute city, his distracted son stood, irresolute and dizzy, driven thither by the harsh decree over which the grim old lawyer exulted.

For the crisis came to Gerald speedily. MacPherson grew tired of his sombre company. He had, moreover, become himself seriously embarrassed, by his reckless expenditure, and was quite ready to shake off this poverty-stricken comrade.

He did not care to part unkindly, or without the show of patronage he had hitherto kept up. He looked around, therefore, and laid before Gerald the proffered employment. It would replenish his empty purse, and put him in the way of future advancement. Gerald saw that at a glance; but he

saw, also, with a deadly sickness at the heart, that it would lose him his good name, and steep his soul in guilt—that it was work no honorable man would soil his hands in touching. He faltered out his scruples, and MacPherson laughed them to scorn.

"Pooh, lad, that is stuff, utter nonsense! Haven't you come to see that it is just as a man's purse is lined that he stands in the world's respect? See what a poor devil you are now, and remember how you were courted and admired when you were heir to the old governor's snug pile! Be rich, and you will be successful, and honored, and applauded. You can quit the business as soon as you are on a safe footing. I have hard enough work to get the chance for you; I thought you'd be eternally grateful to me. But it's all of a piece—the ingratitude of the world. I'm a little down myself; I positively can't help you another dime."

"I will decide to-night," answered Gerald, wondering if the voice which brought the slow words through his dry parched throat could be the same to which Ada Willoughby had once so tenderly responded, which generous comrades had ever gladly hailed, which poor Mrs. Murdoch had many a time declared to him was better than music in her ears.

MacPherson yielded to his whim. He did not ask him to accompany him to dinner or to supper. If he thought a famished stomach would aid his designs, he betrayed no such hint to Gerald.

The unhappy youth found his way like a blind man, groping and staggering, to the miserable attic which he had called his home. He sat down at the table, and dropped his aching head upon his crossed arms.

"What can I do?" muttered he. "I tried my best to earn an honest living, and no one would give me a chance. I cannot starve. I would draw water or hew stone, gladly enough; but because of the bringing up my father gave me, I am looked upon as an impostor when I offer my services. Misfortunes accumulate upon me. What shall I do? what shall I do? Surely I am justified in accepting this only opportunity offered me."

The hours dragged themselves on with a terrible slowness, the silence in the room had something awful and thrilling. Gerald

was numbly conscious of the battle going on between the good and evil spirits, for the possession of his precious undying soul. He glanced around him with nervous shudderings, as though he heard the rustling of angel pinions, the heavy tramp of vicious hoofs. His cheek gathered a fever spot of crimson, in contrast to its deadly whiteness; his throat grew still more parched; a deadly faintness succeeded the pangs of hunger. His eyes wandered wildly around the wretched apartment. There was nothing left, actually nothing that a Jew would advance a dime upon. With a hollow groan he dropped his head again; the shadows were lengthening swiftly, and the twilight, which comes so abruptly upon the narrow streets of the city, gloomed its gray into the dismal attic chamber. Suddenly springing to his feet, he seized his hat.

"Let me go, before I am fairly crazed. A man must have food. If the world refuses it to me in honorable recompense for honest toil, I must get it as I can."

How mournfully the angel pinions waved their farewell flight! How demoniac was the evil chuckle that seemed to sound within his ears! He glared about him in angry terror, and strode forward toward the door.

At that moment steps were heard on the crazy stairs without. One, slow, stumbling, agitated—the other, light, swift and eager. The door swung open, and Gerald Wharmley stood staring blankly at the vision before him.

Two women. One dowdyish, and clumsy, and countrified, wrapped in a gay plaid shawl, the good old face crimson with mingled joy and grief; the other, fair, and lovely, and gracious enough for the beneficent spirit whose rustling wings stirred again to the depths of Gerald's heart—a perfect picture of girlish grace and daintiness. Both fell at his feet, sobbing, incoherently:

"We have found you! O Gerald, at last we have found you!"

"My blessed boy, my poor dear boy! Did you think we joined in his cruelty?"

"Ada, O Ada!" sobbed Gerald, glancing from the girl to his wretched surroundings, and hiding his face in his shaking hands.

She drew them away with her soft fingers, kissing them between the dripping tears.

"Gerald, Gerald, you are not to blame; we know it well enough. O, we have been

cruelly deceived! But we have found it out at last. We know you have no shadow of guilt upon you. We shall never fear that."

The young man shuddered, and shrank away from the pure hands, the holy innocent eyes. What if they had come an hour later? He sank, half fainting, into a chair.

Mrs. Murdoch had taken a sharp look around the bare forlorn room, and back to the hollow wasted cheeks, the pale lips and fever-bright eyes. She put the girl away resolutely, and with her own stout arm lifted up the feeble form.

"Mr. Gerald, you're sick. You've got as good as a fever, this sorrowful minute. And I'm going to take you right home with me, and nurse you up. *I shan't allow you to talk much with Ada. Only just to keep your mind peaceable, she may tell you how the master kept from her your letters, and wouldn't let us do anything to find out about you. He said you'd grown to be a wicked villain; but we didn't believe that—only we were sorely troubled by your not writing to us. We know all about it, now, and we've hunted you up; and we're going to take care of you till you are well, and then you are to take what we've both got, and look out for us. That's just how it is, Mr. Gerald; so don't you say another word. We'll have a carriage and take you home, for you will never walk a step in the world, with such a tremble as this on you.*"

He was, indeed, growing too ill to resist the worthy woman's energetic will. He clung to Ada's hand, and whispered:

"Don't leave me, Ada! But you must not take me to my father; he will never allow it. If I die, tell him I forgive him."

"Alack!" exclaimed Mrs. Murdoch, "he will never speak one of his hard words again; he will never write you another cruel letter. He had a shock yesterday morning, and the doctor says he will never speak, or know anything again. We found the letter among his papers, and started to search for you. You're his heir, after all, Mr. Gerald, and nobody can unsay it; for he tore up the new will the last thing he did before he was taken."

Gerald was beyond the realization of this great change in his fortunes. The shock of the abrupt announcement had been too much for him. His head had fallen back across Ada's arm, and her wild frightened

eyes were peering frantically into his pallid, insensible face.

"Poor dear lamb! he's clear fainted away. How shall we ever get him away? Sure it must have been his mother's spirit put it into our hearts to come to-day, instead of writing to him; for another day, I do believe, would have been too late to help the fever!" ejaculated Mrs. Murdoch, while she was busily chafing the chilly hands.

Ada was too overwhelmed to venture a single word. The wretched room, the evident destitution, had been frightful enough; but this illness completed her horror. She stood blankly gazing into the inanimate face, with a look of utter despair.

"Find some water, Ada. That is cheap enough to be even here. Dear heart! why do you stand like a statue? Sprinkle some water in his face, and then he will revive."

In a short time they were able, with the coachman's help, to take him to the carriage. It was decided the wisest course to get out, by easy drives, to Wharnley Lodge.

Accordingly, one sunny afternoon, into the presence of a white, stiff, deathly figure, with drawn mouth and dull meaning, less eyes, was borne another drooping form, and pallid face, which was laid on a couch beside that of the dying master of Wharnley Lodge. Father and son were face to face.

Gerald's cheek paled to a still more waxy hue, and his eyes overflowed with tears, as he bent forward, with clasping hands, to seek for one sign of recognition. The dull filmy eyes of Squire Wharnley turned slowly and questioningly to that worn haggard face, from which the boyish bloom had been brushed away by the ruthless hands of care and grief. A sudden flicker of interest brightened the pale pupil; there was a convulsive but impotent effort for speech; an expression of intense agony, of wild yearning, was in those wistful eyes, as though they longed to fulfil the office of the dumb palsied lips.

Gerald's sob shook his whole frame, as he cried, "O father, father, give me some sign to show that you have forgiven me—that you are no longer angry with me!"

The poor distorted lips made their best efforts for a smile, the thin crippled fingers reached forth feebly. Ada was quick to guess his wish. She took Gerald's hand and laid it in that weak clasp. The father

smiled again, as his fingers closed over those of his son. The peace and content dimly revealed by the lips crept upward, and gave a tender joy to those still eloquent eyes, which, in the days of health and strength, they had seldom known. They lingered fondly on the young man's face, and then turned appealingly to Ada.

"Yes, yes," sobbed she, "I will love him—I will care for him—I will try to make him happy!"

Another smile. The effort, the peacefulness and content had wonderful effect upon him. The distorted lines were smoothed out of the face; that haunting look of dumb agony vanished, and left a childlike calm. The fingers still clung to the hand of Gerald, but slowly the stiff lids settled over the gazing eyes. The spasmodic breath eased away softly and almost imperceptibly.

"He is asleep," said Ada and Gerald, in low hushed voices.

"He is dead!" said the physician, solemnly.

"Heaven be praised, that I was brought here in time for this scene!" ejaculated Gerald, the tears pouring over his thin pale cheeks.

"It was only because of these unusual circumstances that I consented to so unwise a proceeding," answered the good doctor. "Now you must consent to resign yourself to the tender nursing of Mrs. Murdock. Grieve not for this happy release from so pitiful a state as that of your father must have been, had he lingered here. I am confident that he welcomed the approach of the merciful release. Now you must consider your own health, Mr. Gerald. And indeed it is a refreshing sight to see you here again, and a most be-

neficient chance that brought you in time to receive and give peace at this deathbed."

"Not chance," whispered Gerald to Ada; "O no, not chance—but a blessed interposition of Providence. Some time you shall know all you saved me from."

Gerald recovered health and strength slowly but surely, and was thenceforward a firm, staid, reliable man, free from all those dangerous traits of character, that easy, indolent, yielding nature, that complaisant good-humor, which could be drawn hither and thither at the caprice of his associates, or by the will of circumstance.

Two years after his marriage he had occasion to visit the national capital, and while there, he attended, with his wife, a fashionable levee, given by one of the leaders of the ton. In the midst of the gay talk and merry scene, Ada felt him start nervously, and saw him shudder in horror. She looked around wonderingly, but saw only a tall showily-dressed gentleman, making his way, with a peculiarly significant smile, toward them. Her husband drew her hastily away, and did not seem at rest until he had placed the crowd between them and the unknown man.

"Who was it?" asked Ada, wonderingly.

"It was one who stood in the place of the arch-tempter himself, Heaven forgive him! I cannot think of him without a shudder—to be obliged to speak to him would, I think, be intolerable. It was MacPherson. The sight of him has brought before me, with terrible vividness, all the particulars of my first temptation. Let us go out into the cool air, under the calm holy light of the stars, my Ada, and I shall forget it all, and only remember the dear guardian angel who came in time to save me."

GOING TO BED.

BY REV. DR. H. STANDISH.

ALL the world goes to bed, in some mode or other; but the fashions of so doing present singular variety. Some folk have no other bedstead than mother earth, no other bedclothes than the skins of animals, no other night-gear than the same garments as are worn by day; whereas, at the other end of the scale are found the utmost refinements of splendor and lavish cost.

Among such ancient nations as we know most about, and in many Oriental countries of more recent times, the floor of a room, or the flat terraced roof of a house, served the place of bedstead. A mat or cushion, rolled up during the day, was spread out at night—a simplicity of arrangement which almost dispensed with the duty of "making the bed." In Russia, to the present day, the semi-Europeanized peasant seeks his repose on the top of the immense stoves used in that country, covered with coarse mats or blankets. The Orientals of old, when well-to-do in the world, substituted cushions for mats, and made them elegant as well as comfortable, with rich silks on the outside, and a stuffing of fine wool, down and feathers.

The ancient Egyptians used a pillow of wood, with a recess or hollow to receive the neck. The Israelites had sheep or goatskins for beds, or bags of goats' hair; the better kinds stuffed with wool, cotton or feathers; most usually, however, the pillow was only so stuffed. It was such a pillow as this that Michal had put upon the bolster, in the bed on which the image was laid to save David from the emissaries of Saul. "The Egyptian bedstead," says Mr. Blyth, in his interesting little work on this subject, where he notices the period of the sojourn of the Israelites in that land, "although there seems to have been considerable diversity in the shape of the canopy and the means by which it was decked with hangings, and although it sometimes resembled the modern four-poster, was generally similar in form to our couch. It manifested a considerable amount of taste. One end was raised, and receded in a graceful curve; the legs were sometimes straight, sometimes curved, and the feet

were often fashioned to resemble the claws of animals. The fittings for the day seem to have been different from those used at night. In the daytime there were spread over them coverings, on the gorgeous decorations of which those who were able were lavish in expenditure; they then answered much the same purpose as our sofa. Thus we are told that when the murderers, bent on their deadly work, went to Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, they found him at home, lying on his bed. When, too, the deputation waited on David to thank him for conferring his crown on Solomon, he must have been reclining on his bed, for it is said that in token of his pleasure he raised himself thereon. It is also related of Jacob, in his dying interview with Joseph, that he laid himself on the head of his bed." That at the time of the prophet Amos the Jews indulged in much luxury of beds and bedsteads, when they had the means of so doing, is proved by the passage, "They lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall." Solomon's bedstead, we know, was of cedar of Lebanon, with a bottom of gold, pillars of silver, and covering of purple.

We are prone to believe that the spring mattress is quite a modern invention, a product of the age of elastic steel plates and coiled wires; but there is reason to doubt the correctness of this conclusion. The ancient Egyptians appear to have had an article somewhat similar in character, if not in the construction, at least in its purpose; it consisted of a flat web or surface, constructed of transverse pieces of bamboo cane or palm branches. This was very much in use, often serving, when placed on the floor, the threefold purpose of bedstead, bed and mattress. The Assyrians, a luxurious people in many ways, knew how to make and to use voluptuous couches. When King Ahasuerus gave a great feast, the guests reclined on couches of silver and gold; these couches were placed on a pavement of porphyry, marble, alabaster and blue colored stone; while the

hall which contained them was surrounded by hangings of white and green velvet, fastened, with cords of fine linen and purple, to silver rings and marble pillars. It was customary in those days, at the houses of the great, to recline on couches at meals, not to sit on chairs or stools; and sometimes the couch used for this purpose by day served as a bed at night. The Greeks and Romans adopted the use of these couches rather extensively. The framework was sometimes very gorgeous, being resplendent with gold, silver, amber, carving, inlay, and veneered with ivory. The bedding was quieter in tone, consisting of quilted mattresses of cotton, woollen or leather, stuffed with wool, weeds or dry leaves; over this was thrown a cloak, often the same that served the wearer during the day. Two or three coverlets, according to the temperature of the season, covered the sleeper; a round pillow was used, stuffed like the bed. In later effeminate days, when the manliness of the Greek character had been nearly worn out, the bedsteads and bedding became still more gorgeous; and such was also the case with the Romans in the days of the empire. The trading and middle classes were, of course, much less sumptuously accommodated. Their bedsteads were of common wood, bottomed with planks pierced with holes for the admission of fresh air, or of leathern thongs fastened one over another. Sometimes a sort of hammock or slung bed was used, strong cord netting fastened to four pillars.

Coming down to later ages, and to our own country, we find that in Anglo-Saxon wills mention was often made of straw beds and pillows, bedclothes, coverlets and curtains. A common bed, such as was in use among the poorer classes, was nothing more than a sack stuffed with straw. The bedsteads were, for the most part, short boxes, with an inclined frame to support a pillow, on which the head of the sleeper rested. In better households a larger box was used, having four posts or pillars to support a canopy or tester—perhaps the original pattern whence our four-poster was derived. The illuminations or colored drawings, with which old manuscripts were so often adorned, afford curious testimony to the bed-gear of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers. Among the Harleian MSS. is one decorated with a picture of a bedroom,

with three beds; they are what we should call stump bedsteads, with four posts rising a little above the level of the bedclothes; two are plain at the sides, the others railed or balustraded. The pillows are propped up so as to be nearly vertical. In another example, shown in the Cotton MSS., a child's cot is shaped in a peculiar way; it somewhat resembles a boat, hung at the ends by hooks from two uprights; these uprights spring from a framework or carriage, provided with four wheels—altogether a snug and convenient arrangement.

In the Norman period even the better classes had little more than plain wooden bedsteads, with coarse bedding; while the commonalty had to be content (more or less) with straw for a bed and skins for bedding. Some estates, in the curious days of feudal tenure, were held on condition of the recipient supplying clean straw for the king's bed, when the royal personage was journeying that way. There is a wardrobe account extant, in which a sum of fifty shillings (large in those days) is set down for silk, taffety, fustian and cotton for King John's bed. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the bedstead was customarily shaped like a crib or cot, and was placed in a kind of recess, at the side of the room; but the style adopted by royalty was ornate enough, with its velvet, satin, silk and ostrich feathers. There was, in fact, a strange mingling of splendor with rudeness, luxury with bareness, in the arrangements of those days concerning bedsteads, beds and bedding. Among the royal MSS. is one with an illumination, representing apparently some Anglo-Norman king, lying on a low bedstead, with a dark wrapper or coverlet, and a bolster and pillow so very much raised that he occupies nearly a sitting position; curtains, suspended from a rod, form a kind of half-tester. It gives us an insight into some of the usages of the time, that, although the royal personage has a crown upon his head, he is wholly without body linen—in plain English, a nightshirt. In another pictorial representation the bedding is ample enough to wholly hide the bedstead; the tester is as large as the bedstead, and is provided with small side curtains. Among the Cotton MSS. are two still more curious, representing ladies' bed-chambers. In one of them is a bedstead with a fringed tester, ample coverlets, the undersheet brought

up so high as to be drawn over the head of the sleeper, and the pillow nearly vertical. In the other some of the carving of the bedstead is shown, and the valence of the tester is embroidered with stars. The materials employed were often rich and costly. Chaucer knew something about this when he wrote:

"Of downe of pure dove white
I wol give him a feather bed,
Rayed with gold, and right wel clad
In fine black satin d'outremer,
And many a pillow, and every bere
Of cloth of Raynes, to sleep on soft."

Raynes is supposed to have been Rennes, in Bretagne, where fine linen was woven.

Requests of beds with worsted hangings were frequently recorded in those times. About the middle of the fourteenth century the Countess of Northampton bequeathed to her daughter, the Countess of Arundel, "a bed of red worsted, embroidered;" still later, Lady Despencer gave her daughter Philippa "a bed of red worsted, with all the furniture appertaining thereto;" and later still, Lady Elizabeth Andrews gave to William Wyndsores "a red bed of worsted, with all the hangings." These details are given in the *Testamenta Vetusta*. The cradle honored by the bodily presence of Henry the Fifth, when an infant, was a box or crib about thirty-eight inches long, nineteen inches wide, and twenty-nine inches deep; it was suspended on two carved uprights, on the top of each of which was the figure of a dove. In the reign of Henry the Sixth, Lady Abergavenny bequeathed, by will a bed and its trappings, which were described with all the minuteness of a loving connoisseur in such matters: "A bed of gold swans, with tappetes of green tapestry, with branches and flowers of divers colors, and two pairs of sheets of Raynes; a piece of fustian, six pairs of other sheets, six pairs of blankets, six mattresses, six pillows; with curtains and vancours that belong to the bed aforesaid. A bed of cloth of gold, with leopards, with the cushions and tappetes of the very best red worsted, that belong to the same bed; also four pairs of sheets, four pairs of blankets, three pillows, three mattresses, a bed of velvet, white and black paled, with cushions, tappetes and forms that belong to the said bed. My bed of silk, black and red, embroidered with

woodbine flowers of silver; and all the casters and apparel that belong thereto." We can imagine how proud the noble dame must have been of all these dainty luxuries. During the Wars of the Roses, in the latter half of the fifteenth century, splendor and comfort alike declined, and many classes of the community were stricken with dire poverty. The beds of the common people became, as they had been some centuries earlier, a mere layer of straw or skins, placed on the floor or on a trestle; while the pillow was little other than a block of wood.

During the Tudor period, when the middle classes were becoming by degrees a power in the country, their improved position enabled them to provide better furniture for their sitting-rooms, and better beds and bedsteads for their sleeping accommodation. The tester and the four-poster reached the houses of families deprived, until that period, of such comforts. Of course, royalty and nobility were provided in more ornate and luxurious style. There is extant the order issued, and, we may presume, acted upon, for the daily making of Henry the Seventh's bed; it is most elaborate, prescribing what portions of the duty are to devolve upon the yeoman of the wardrobe, the gentleman usher, the groom of the wardrobe, the yeoman of the body, the squire of the bed, the yeoman of the chamber, and the yeomen of the stuff. It might, perchance, strike some of us that this formality must have been nearly equivalent to Dick and Tom helping Harry to do nothing; but the persons concerned evidently did not think so; exhausted nature required refreshment after such labors, and, accordingly, we are told, these palatial domestics retired from the royal bedroom to an antechamber, where they partook of meat, beer and wine. The bed on which Henry the Eighth slept contained straw beneath its finery; and a curious order was issued regarding the making of this bed. The usher was directed "to search the straw through with a dagger, that there be none untruth therein; and to tumble over on the down bed for the search thereof." This, if our surmise be correct, was a precaution against possible intended mischief to the royal person.

Nevertheless, throughout even the sixteenth century, the sleeping accommoda-

tion for the middle and working classes was very rough. Henry the Eighth's rush purveyor, who supplied one of the materials for making rushlights and for strewing on the floors, was directed also to provide straw for the slumbers of the king's servants, the said slumbers being enjoyed in the kitchen. Straw beds and wooden pillows were in use among the peasantry down to the very close of the Tudor period.

It affords a notable proof of the magic power exercised by Shakspeare, that a mere brief mention of the Great Bed of Ware has made an abiding impression for more than two centuries and a half, and bids fair to do the like for two centuries and a half to come. The passage occurs in Twelfth Night, where, in the second scene of the third act, Sir Toby Belch urges Sir Andrew Aguecheek to write a challenge to his supposed rival: "Go, write it in a martial hand; be curt and brief; it is no matter how witty, so it be elegant and full of invention; if thou thou'st him some thrice, it shall not be amiss; and as many lies as will lie in thy sheet of paper, although the sheet were big enough for the Bed of Ware in England, set 'em down." No earlier mention of the said bed has been found; but as Shakspeare speaks of it so familiarly, we may infer that it was known before his time. However this may be, the bed acquired a double celebrity—for its large size, and for Shakspeare's mention of it. In his day it was in the manor house at Ware, Hertford, the residence of the Fanshaws; but whether it was made for a Fanshaw, why it was made of such large dimensions, and who were the sleepers who reposed in it, we have no means of determining. The bed-

stead is ten feet nine inches in length, about the same in breadth, and seven feet six inches in height. The two posts at the foot are very massive; and nearly the whole of the bedstead is elaborately carved, especially the panelling at the bed's head. Certainly, since the days of Og, King of Bashan, there have been few such four-posters as this. At some date not now known the bedstead was transferred from Manor Park to one of the inns at Ware; and here it became an object of pilgrimage, and, in such wise, was doubtless, financially beneficial to mine host. Stories are told of twelve people sleeping in it at once, merely to test its capacity; and, at one time it was customary to drink a can of beer on coming into the august presence of the mighty bed—doubtless, for the good of the house. Four or five years ago this Shakspearian relic (if we may so term it) was purchased by the proprietor of the Rye House, who built an ornate wooden structure to contain it, as well as the tapestry and carved fittings which had been kept in the same room.

It was in Shakspeare's time that James the Sixth of Scotland, afterwards James the First of England, went to Copenhagen to bring over his young bride, Anne of Denmark. She brought with her "ane stately bedstead, made of walnut-wood, and elaborately ornamented with carved figures." This royal relic is, or was recently, in the possession of the Earl of Elgin. In advancing into modern times, through the Stuart period into that of the Georges, there is, of course, a multitude of gossip concerning beds, bedsteads, bedding and bedclothes.

GOING TO TOWN.

BY MISS CAMILLA WILLIAN.

SADIE GOODRICH had a rich mother, and a beautiful home; but she had no father. He had been dead so many years that Sadie could not remember him. There were no other children, and Sadie and her mother lived just out of the city, and were as happy as the days were long. But once in a while Mrs. Goodrich would sigh, and say, "I wish I knew where poor Carrie is!"

Carrie was Mrs. Goodrich's only sister, whom she had not seen for ten or twelve years. She didn't even know where she lived. Carrie had married very young, and gone away out West and to California, and there had been some trouble between her and her father and Mr. Goodrich. I believe these two gentlemen did not like the man she married. So they separated, and wrote no letters. And by-and-by Mrs. Goodrich's father died very suddenly, and then Mr. Goodrich died, and no answer came to the letters that were sent here and

there to Mrs. Carrie Blake telling her. And sometimes Mrs. Goodrich thought that her sister was still angry, and didn't want to have anything to do with them, and then she thought that poor Carrie might be sick, or poor, or dead, and then she felt bad about her.

"I used to be very fond of my sister," she said to her little girl; "just as you would be of yours, if you had a sister a good deal younger than you. Carrie was ten years younger than me, and only nineteen when she married. She would be twenty-nine now. If you had a little sister as much younger, she could be only a year old; for you are only eleven. Carrie was very pretty, and I used to be proud of her. She had yellow curly hair, and large black eyes, and her skin was as white as milk. This looks like her, only not so pretty."

Mrs. Goodrich would then show Sadie a miniature painted on ivory, and Sadie

would look at it, and say; "O, isn't she pretty! I wish she would come and live with us, mamma."

This happened over and over; but Sadie never got tired of hearing the story, and seeing the beautiful picture.

One day Mrs. Goodrich came from town with a rocking-carriage for a little boy in the neighborhood.

"Put it in the garden, John," she said to the coachman. "And this evening I want you to carry it over to Mrs. Porter's."

It was then about six o'clock, and in half an hour they would have their tea.

"Just time for me to have a good ride in Charlie's rocking-carriage," Sadie said.

So she ran down the walk, and got into the carriage.

It was a delightful ride, for the seat was nicely cushioned with garnet velvet; there were garnet silk reins, and the rockers were smooth, and the carriage prettily painted.

"I'm going to town, mamma," called out Sadie, seeing her mother pass by the door on her way up stairs. "What shall I buy for you?"

Mrs. Goodrich came and stood in the front door, smiling down on her daughter.

"You may bring you and me each of us a sister," she said. "And be sure you get back to tea."

Then the mother went up stairs to change her dress, and Sadie chirruped at the wooden horse, and rocked as hard as she could. "I'm going to town, horse," she said. "Hurry! I'm going after two sisters, one for ma and one for me."

Then she rocked harder still till the gravel flew, and the carriage did really go a little way at a time, getting nearer and nearer the gate, just as you have seen a rocking-chair rock all round the room. John the coachman came past leading the horses to the stable; the gardener came in, and a visitor went out. Each one stopped a moment to look at the little girl in the rocking-carriage, and to each one she said that she was going to town.

By-and-by she found herself close to the gate, and then she was tired enough to rest. As she stopped, pulled her horse in with a "Whoa!" and then dropped the reins, she saw that there was a little girl standing and looking at her through the gate. She was one of the most beautiful little girls that ever was seen, though she looked pale, and her clothes were very poor. Her eyes were

large and black, and had a bluish-velvet shade to them, like ripe grapes, but her skin was as fair as a lily, and her long wavy hair was a light yellow. This little girl could not have been more than five or six years old, and she looked at Sadie with sad and steady eyes.

"O little girl! who are you?" cried Sadie. "You look just like my Aunt Carrie."

The child said nothing, only looked steadily through the gate at the pretty garden and house, and the nicely dressed little girl riding in that most beautiful carriage. Sadie jumped out and ran down to the gate.

"Come right in and let my mother see you!" she said, eagerly, grasping the little stranger's arm.

The child looked frightened, and tried to pull away, turning and holding out her hands to somebody. Then Sadie saw that there was a poor woman sitting down by the roadside.

"I didn't mean to frighten her," Sadie said. "I only wanted her to come in for mamma to see. Won't you come too, and rest? And if you want some supper, you shall have some."

The woman got up and came slowly toward the gate, taking the child's hand when she met her, leading her back. She looked very pale and tired.

"I have walked a good way," she said, "and I would like to rest. Come, Isa, the little girl wants us to go in."

When she saw that her mother was going, little Isa went quite willingly, and they all walked up the garden-path together, the two children in advance, and the woman following.

When Sadie and her little friend reached the front door, Mrs. Goodrich was just coming down stairs.

"Why, my child!" she said, "who have you got there? Why, what a pretty child!"

"I've been to town, and this is my little sister," Sadie said. "And your big sister is just outside the door."

"What do you mean?" her mother said, but kept looking at the little girl. She sat down in one of the hall chairs and drew the child to her.

"Who does she look like, mamma?" asked Sadie. "I thought in a minute, and made her come in for you to see. Isn't she just like Aunt Carrie's picture?"

Mrs. Goodrich still kept looking at the child. "It is strange!" she said to herself. "I didn't think there were two in the world with such eyes and hair together."

Sadie glanced toward the door, and saw the child's mother standing there, looking at little Isa and Mrs. Goodrich, and tears were rolling over her cheeks. As Sadie looked, the woman exclaimed, "Isa!"

The child turned quickly, and Mrs. Goodrich lifted her face as quickly, and the two women looked steadily at each other.

The stranger never moved, only leaned against the door, never even noticed the child when Isa went to her, only looked over her head toward Mrs. Goodrich.

Sadie began to think that it was very odd, and she was a little frightened when she saw that her mother's face turned very red, then very pale, then that she got up and almost ran toward the door.

"Who are you? What is your name?" Mrs. Goodrich cried out.

"O Isa, am I so changed that my own sister does not know me?" exclaimed the stranger, bursting into tears.

Then Sadie began to think that she was losing her senses. For her mother cried out, and threw her arms around the woman's neck, and the woman fainted, and

the servants came running with water and smelling-salts, and they carried the woman into the parlor, and laid her on a sofa, and Sadie's mother, cried over her, and kissed her, and called her poor dear.

But at last it all came round right. The stranger was better, and sat up, and then Mrs. Goodrich brought Sadie to her, and told her to kiss her dear Aunt Carrie and coax her to stay and live forever with them.

For this was indeed Mrs. Goodrich's sister, Carrie Blake. Her husband was dead, and she was poor, and she had come there to see if her sister still cared anything about her.

"I got no letters, and I didn't know that father was dead till I reached town," said she. "And I only dared to come to you, because I thought you must be lonely."

Well, they made Mrs. Blake and Isa stay there and live with them, and never were people happier.

But Sadie always said that she brought her aunt and cousin from town, when she went there in the rocking-carriage.

Mrs. Blake looked poor and old when she came, but she has got back her good looks now, and there isn't a prettier woman in town.

HETTY'S PROTEGE.

BY PRESLEY W. MORRIS.

"SOME music, miss?"

"O yes, please."

A young girl was standing on the piazza of a stylish country residence. She was sweet as a snowdrop, and beautiful as a lily. It was a sunshiny March morning, the first springlike day of the season. For a week previous the winds had shrieked and raged, but now a soft breeze blew up from the south.

The boy, evidently a wandering minstrel, seated himself at her words upon the lower step of the piazza. He unstrapped a battered concertina, and proceeded to play. He played one tune, and then accompanied the next with his voice. His singing was delightful, his voice being clear and sweet. As he played and sang he at times lifted his eyes to the face of the little girl whom he was entertaining. They were clear brown eyes, with a shadow of sorrow in them; melancholy in one so young.

The boy finished his song, and then lifting his ragged cap from his head, held it out bashfully. Poor child! he knew the bitter penalty of failure to secure reward for his music. The girl's face clouded.

"I'm so sorry!" she cried. "I have no money, and papa is gone."

She stood for a moment seemingly debating in her mind what she could do for the boy. A door opened, and a pleasant-faced negro woman looked out.

"Bress your sweet heart, Miss Hetty, whar's you been?" she said. "Yes, yes, I sees. Breakfas' is ready, darlin'."

Hetty's face cleared.

"I have no doubt you are hungry," she said to the boy. "Come in and have some breakfast."

"Thank you," said the boy, in a musical tone. "I have had my breakfast."

His English was quite pure in pronunciation.

Again Hetty's face clouded; but before she could say anything more a man clad in dirt and rags, who had been walking up the avenue unnoticed, reached the piazza. He said something to the boy in a language that Hetty did not understand. He received a reply in the same language. Then

he grew angry, and seizing the slight figure of the child, shook and beat him. A hunted terrified light came into the boy's eyes.

"You pe one little lazy villaint!" cried the man, in broken English, a vindictive cruel expression in his wicked face. "I dink I shall haf to kill you if you don't do petter."

Hetty's indignation flamed out.

"You great coward!" she exclaimed. "Stop! or I'll have my papa to hang you. Aint you ashamed of yourself? Stop, I say!"

But the man did not heed her. Aunt Winnie, the old colored servant, was yet on the piazza, and her anger showed in a more practical way.

"You great dirty scoundrel," she said, "you jes let dat dar boy alone, or I am a gwine to set de dogs on yer. Here, King! here, King!"

At her call a great dog with shaggy coat came bounding around the corner of the residence. At sight of the minstrel boy and his master he paused, and with bristles erect, gave forth a low growl.

"Now jes let dat boy be," added Aunt Winnie.

The man was quick to obey. His ugly face paled. Again he spoke to the boy in a language unintelligible to Hetty or Aunt Winnie. Then he turned and walked slowly down the avenue, the boy following close behind.

"Don't you go," said Hetty.

The boy threw back a glance from his brown eyes that contained gratitude, pain and fear. But he neither turned back nor refused to go on.

"If that man abuses you," Hetty called out, when she saw that he did not return, "come back here, and my papa will take care of you. I know he will."

The man reached the iron gate that opened into the avenue. He opened it and passed out.

"It shall pe te vorse for te one leetle villaint!" he called back, defiantly.

Hetty was half crying as she followed Aunt Winnie into the breakfast-room. Child though she was, the brown eyes of

the minstrel boy had touched a mysterious chord in her heart.

Hetty was the motherless daughter of the Hon. John Holland, ex-member of Congress, capitalist, owner of this beautiful country residence, and many broad acres around it; and proprietor of half the iron works in Pomeroy's smoky town, half a dozen miles away, and situated across the line in another State, besides.

The day passed, and a night likewise. The afternoon of the next day came. It was three o'clock when Aunt Winnie answered a timid knock at the front entrance—a knock that she would not have heard if she had not been passing close at hand. She opened the door, and beheld standing there a boy, with a battered concertina hanging strapped to his side. He was a pitious spectacle, trembling, and his face scratched and swollen.

"Bress your heart!" cried Aunt Winnie.

"She said I should come back," murmured the boy.

"Yes. Jes come right in."

Aunt Winnie led the way, and he followed her into the kitchen, her own domain.

"Sit down," said the warm-hearted negro woman, "and jes make yourself right at home."

At that moment Hetty ran past the open door of the kitchen, the great dog King following closely at hand.

"Hetty, Hetty!" Aunt Winnie called.

Hetty paused, and, turning back, entered. King put his paws on the kitchen floor, but did not venture entirely in.

"Here is dat poor little boy," Aunt Winnie said.

Hetty smiled, and reached out her hand to him.

"Poor boy!" she said. "Papa aint here yet, but King and I will take care of you."

A portion of the boy's pain and terror seemed to depart from his eyes at those simple words from the little girl. She touched his swollen and bleeding face with her white hand.

"He has hurt you," she said, pityingly.

"Yes," murmured the boy.

"Tell me your name."

"Giorgio."

"That cruel man beat you?"

"Yes."

"Is this the first time?"

"O no. Many, many times has he beat-

en me. But he has been worst this time."

"O!" cried Hetty, sympathetically. "He shall never do it any more."

Giorgio trembled.

"I am afraid he will," he said. "I have tried to run away from him before, but he always catches me and beats me."

"But you never had any one to take care of you before," said Hetty.

"Not since papa died. He was like you, miss, an American. Mamma was an Italian, and died before he died."

Hetty asked Giorgio many other questions.

But the boy was destined to be left in peace but a short time. At sundown Hetty was out on the piazza. Child that she was, she admired the beauties of nature, and the sun sinking grandly in the west attracted her attention.

"Giorgio," she called, "come and see."

Giorgio came at her call. But a few minutes before a figure had crept cautiously up the avenue. That figure was now crouching behind a post and a clambering vine that concealed it.

As Giorgio came out upon the piazza a man sprang upon him with a blow. The poor boy received it without a cry, but that hunted look of terror came back in his eyes.

"You von leetle villaint!" cried the man. "I find you one time again."

He repeated the blow, and then lifted Giorgio's slight form in his arms, and ran down the piazza steps.

"Stop!" cried Hetty Holland. "Stop, you bad man! Here, King!"

But King did not answer the call this time. Hetty sprang down the piazza, and ran after Giorgio's cruel master. The man had nearly reached the iron gate of the avenue when a carriage drove up. He paused with his burden, and a tall man with broad shoulders leaped out of the carriage.

"O papa! dear papa!" screamed Hetty, joyously.

The gentleman opened the gate and entered. Hetty sprang around Giorgio's master, and seized his hand.

"What does this mean?" said Mr. Holland, stopping to kiss Hetty first, however.

"Papa, that bad man wants to kill Giorgio," said Hetty.

Mr. Holland looked at the wicked face of the man, letting his gaze fall to the

bruised and bleeding one of Giorgio. In those glances he understood the situation.

"O papa, save Giorgio! save Giorgio!" pleaded Hetty.

Mr. Holland was a politician, in a certain sense, but his heart was a very tender and honorable one, for all that.

"Drop that boy!" he said, sternly, to the man.

"The boy is my son," said the man, in a whining tone.

"I am not!" screamed Giorgio, angrily. "He lies!"

Giorgio was not quite an angel, and the human part was showing out at that false claim.

"Drop that boy!" Mr. Holland, repeated. There was still no sign of obedience.

"Here, Tom!"

A stalwart negro man came from the carriage at those last words.

"Take that boy away from that man!" commanded Mr. Holland.

The black man advanced, but Giorgio's master saw that he must be conquered, and placed the boy upon the earth.

"Now follow me up to the house," said Mr. Holland, to the man, "and I will hear your side of the story, as well as the boy's. If justice demands that you should have him, he will be given to you."

But the man knew that circumstances were altogether against him, that his brutal treatment of Giorgio was strong testimony in opposition to him, and leaving all that out, that he had no more legal or just right to the boy than Mr. Holland himself.

"Take de boy now," he exclaimed, "but rather than tat you shall keep him, he shall tie, vor me will kill him."

And with his features working with convulsive rage, the man, Giorgio's foe, turned and went away.

Several days, two, three weeks passed. The last of March came. Giorgio had been dressed in neat clothes, and was certainly a handsome and intelligent-looking boy. He was gentle and kind, and all about the place, even to Mr. Holland, grew to love him.

King, Mr. Holland's great dog, formed a strong attachment for the boy. He followed him around, and displayed his affection in every possible manner.

It was the last day of March. The day was as warm as summer. In the afternoon Giorgio strayed out into the orchard, and

laid down beneath an apple tree. The breath of the spring was sweet, and wooed him to slumber. He closed his eyes dreamily, and presently fell asleep.

King had followed him. The dog, too, laid down a short distance from the boy. He closed his eyes drowsily.

Shortly a man stole up to the boy's side. It was Giorgio's foe. He had been watching for this chance for days. King was lying behind a bush, and the man did not behold him. He lifted Giorgio in his arms. He stole softly away with the boy.

"I shall steal te poy, or me kill him," he muttered, under his breath.

Would King awake?

On, on went Giorgio's foe with his burden. And King awoke. He shook himself lazily, and started toward the house on a slow trot. Suddenly he paused. He acted as if he had forgotten something. He turned around. He walked back to where Giorgio had been lying. He snuffed the ground. His bristles became erect. One low fierce growl was all the sound he made. Then he started off on the trail of Giorgio's foe.

Giorgio awoke in the arms of his cruel master. He gave out one cry of terror that was stopped in its birth by the wicked grasp of the man upon his throat.

But that was the last act of cruelty that Giorgio's foe would ever perform. At the instant that the boy had given that smothered cry, King was close at the back of the man. He leaped. His white fangs gleamed. There was a cry of mortal agony. Giorgio's foe rolled to the earth.

It was soon all over. King had tasted blood, and, angry as he was, it made him a beast of prey. He killed Bernardo, Giorgio's foe.

* * * * *
Mr. Holland did well by Giorgio. He educated him, and the gentle boy developed into a noble man.

* * * * *

"George."

"What, Hetty?"

"Do you mean what you have said so often?"

"O Hetty!"

"George, do you mean it?"

"Yes."

"I believe I have teased you long enough, George. I will be cruel no more. I do love you."

"O Hetty, I am unworthy of so great a blessing. I who—"

"Hush!"

She placed her hand over his mouth.

"Papa is in the library," she said, archly.

He took her hand and led her out. They reached the library.

"Mr. Holland," he said, "Hetty loves me, and we want your blessing."

Mr. Holland rose and took the hand of each.

"I love you as a son already, George," he said, "and if Hetty loves you, you shall be so in reality."

Ah me! it is the old, old story.

* * * * *

O yes, Giorgio had changed the musical Italian name into its English equivalent George.

HOW IT CAME TO PASS.

BY FRANK A. BROWN.

I.

MARK EATON was an exception to the rule, and Cupid's arrows fell blunted against what was supposed to be his heart. Nor was he considered an exception by himself alone, for his acquaintances—he said he had no friends—looked upon him as unassailable. Match-making mammas had quite given up all plots and plans concerning him, and entirely ceased hinting Mark's desirability to their dear Amelias and sweet Marias. Happy Mark! for whom no batteries of sparkling eyes directed their murderous fires; to whom the whole petticoat world appeared indifferent, and whose affections were centered on himself alone. Mark claimed a fondness for literary pursuits; in fact, had on more than one occasion let men know that such were his sole pursuits. He was one of those fortunate persons who are said to come into the world with a spoon of a certain precious metal in their mouths. Yet Mark's mouth was no larger than the average of infants' mouths, and therefore the spoon must have been of small dimensions; was, in all probability, an egg-spoon. Mark was the only son of his father, and that father was dead. Mark had no recollection of his mother, for the good lady had gone out of the world about the same time Mark came into it; and as he was the only child, he was his only relation in his immediate family. People said that was why he was so selfish; but people say a great deal that isn't true. Because poor Mark lived in a big house with only his parrot, dogs, cats, mosquitos and servants, male and female, and no wife, society called him selfish!

Society is a monstrous imposition—at least so Mark thought; and he was in the habit of occasionally congratulating himself that he was very indifferent to what society thought of him. One thing he felt sure of, and that was that his household loved him from the seven-foot footman to the very small mosquito. Therefore Mark, being satisfied with himself, was happy.

He never learned a trade, nor studied for a profession. He said there was no occasion for it. His college career was, how-

ever, unexceptionably brilliant, and he carried off prizes and honors without end. At college he formed a strong liking for a classmate, Harry Ogilvie by name. When Mark liked anything he liked it very much; and therefore his liking for Harry was of no ordinary nature. Harry, unfortunately, was not born with a spoon in his mouth, or, if he had one at all, it was only pewter. It was never understood how such a liking should exist in Mark Eaton's heart for a poor law student who had none of the bright genius of his own mind, nor his many intellectual attainments. One thing only Harry excelled him in, and that was personal appearance. Mark was dark-haired, with a pale quiet face, deep-set eyes, and firmly-cut mouth, and was of medium height; not good-looking, but of rather striking and remarkable appearance. Though not one to fall in love with at first sight, still he was not easily forgotten; and the impression he left behind was generally one of a peculiarly pleasant character. But Harry Ogilvie, how different! He was tall, of exquisite proportions, with a glorious head of curly blonde hair, deep blue eyes, Grecian nose and forehead, a woman's complexion, and faultless mouth and teeth. There was a drawback to his beauty, however, in the lines of his face, which denoted at times a sort of insincerity and weakness combined. Still, this was only apparent to the closest observer of the human countenance, and even so severe a critic could forgive it when he looked upon so perfect a specimen of mankind.

Mark, unlike Harry, was averse to much society, although the latter occasionally succeeded in dragging him out to a reception or evening party. His time was chiefly occupied with his books and writings, and he looked upon the constant round of parties, balls and operas as only fit for men who had but small intellects, and fops whose time was spent in doing nothing but decorating and languishing neath the glances of an artificial mistress. It was wondered why he should make Ogilvie an exception, for Ogilvie's mind was but shal-

low. Perhaps a reason may have been found in his good-nature and good looks. Moreover, Harry owed his life to Mark, who, in a swimming match, had gallantly rescued him when powerless from cramp. Ever after that event Mark had felt himself drawing towards him, and certainly Harry's gratitude and affection seemed boundless.

It was a raw dreary evening in December not long ago. Time, just after a late dinner. Place, Park Avenue. House, Mr. Mark Eaton's. Mark liked grate fires; he would have them; swore they were snug and looked hospitable; and would not be reconciled to furnaces, gratings, stoves, and modern methods of heating.

On this same raw evening in December Mark was in his study, leaning back in an easy-chair, placed exactly in front of a glowing fire. Between him and the fender there was a creature staring at him in the face with a sleepy self-satisfied stare, and which gave vent to its feelings in a low monotonous murmur, like the hum of a kettle when boiling. This was the cat.

It was certainly a snug-looking room, where all the available space was filled with books, drawings, papers and pictures in great confusion. There was just room enough for a small window, a door, the fireplace aforementioned, and a couple of armchairs and sofa, while a table in the middle stood loaded down with a ponderous desk, reference books and writing paper.

In his private room Mr. Eaton was undeniably untidy; but elsewhere in the house all was in perfect order, being under the control of a very energetic and consequential dame known as the housekeeper. She was afraid of only one thing, and that was the study, into which no one was allowed to go except Harry Ogilvie; hence the disorderly appearance it presented. This was the one great sorrow of her life, coupled with the wifeless condition of the dear young master, which troubled her not a little, for Mrs. Cleaver loved the master for his own sake, as well as the dear lady's who had given him life.

"We are getting old, Blinker, are we not?" said Mark, slowly rubbing one hand over the other, and looking gravely at the cat.

The cat looked gravely at him, but said not a word.

"Did you ever think of marrying, Blinker?" he said again.

Blinker smiled knowingly.

"Well, well, I suppose I am looked upon by society as an outcast, and surely—Hullo, Harry! is that you?" he said, as the door was quickly opened and shut, and that dashing person, tumbling over Webster's unabridged, sank into the one vacant chair; and in doing so pushed Blinker so rudely, that he rose, wagged his tail very slowly, and walked under the table. Blinker never liked Harry Ogilvie. Of course he was a cat, and did not know better. Had he seen how the ladies made love to him, he might have changed his opinion.

"Say, Mark, old fellow! how in the name of all that's holy can you continue to exist in such a hermitage as this?" asked the vivacious Harry.

"It suits me well enough, my boy," said Mark. "You know I take delight in these old books which you look upon with such horror; besides, it is not to be expected you could sympathize with me in my pursuits."

"Hardly!" ejaculated his guest.

"You see, Harry," continued Mark, "you are full of life and spirits; you are a splendid animal, with about as much brains as Blinker. I consider you the best specimen of modern young manhood I have ever seen. Don't be angry, now, because I think you deficient in brains. The Almighty has made that secondary loss up to you in other ways. He made you good-looking. He gave you grand animal spirits, and a fascinating power which I am told the women cannot resist."

"Well, of all the compliments, this beats—"

"Don't talk—I hadn't finished, my dear boy. I was about to say I admired you amazingly. You are a grand specimen of the present age." And, lighting his pipe, Mark proceeded to puff forth smoke in a straight line with Harry's face.

"Well, old boy, I'll forgive you," laughed his visitor. "You are a good fellow—a capital fellow—but, 'pon my life, you do say the queerest things! But what I came here to say was this—"

"Go ahead," said Mark; "I am attentive."

"Well, you know Belle Grandison has come to stop at the Lunds' place, don't you?"

"I do, now you have told me."

"Dear me! perhaps you don't even know who she is?"

"One of your flames, I presume, you have so many."

"Not exactly," said Harry; "she's a bit above me, you know, and an awful swell; though I did think at one time she gave me some encouragement."

"Well, what were you going to say about her?"

"Why, the Lunds—you know Lund, no end of tin—his girls, you know, were at school with Belle Grandison. I was going to say the Lunds are giving a reception in her honor."

"Well," said Mark, laconically.

"Of course, old Lund will have everything in big style, and you will have a formal invitation, you know. I've just got mine."

"I think I saw something of the sort somewhere here. I paid no attention to it," said Mark.

"You don't mean to say you won't go?" cried Harry.

"I had so determined. I get so many, that I never open three-fourths of them."

"It shows how glad people would be to see you."

"Merely on account of my rent-roll," remarked his friend, satirically. "All a sham, my dear boy, and a very transparent one," he added.

"Well, but now, my dear Mark, I have come specially to beg you to come with me."

"Where to?" asked Mark.

"Why, to Lund's, of course. I am sure you won't refuse me, after coming all this way in this beastly weather," said Harry, in a discontented voice.

"I suppose you think I shall fall down and worship with you," laughed Mark.

"O, I know your confounded prejudice against women, and therefore I wouldn't bet on it. But if you don't show her some attention she'll feel pretty badly, for she knows you are the biggest catch in the city; and ten to one she will set her cap at you."

"I will go with you on one condition," said Mark.

"And that?" asked Harry.

"Is that I may do as I like when I get there. Miss Grandison will not look at me a second time, and as it's doubtful

whether I should do her the honor, I shall be able to excuse her inattention. Harry, my boy, I am safe, perfectly safe; don't trouble yourself about me. Where does the beauty come from?"

"Baltimore. I saw her the other day at Lund's, and I tell you she is a stunner, and no mistake."

"Well, I will go, to please you. But you will call for me, I suppose. I shall want you to post me as to names, etc. I have seen so little society of late, and am poor at remembering faces."

"I'll be here, old boy. By Jove! I'm glad you are going. I was much afraid you'd not consent."

"It's only a little matter," said Mark. "And I am glad to oblige you, Harry."

"Well, my task is ended. You yield; many thanks. I must go now. That little French widow will be mad because I am not there. You see I had to take her to Wallack's," said Harry, buttoning up his coat, with his back to the fire. "Rather nice—fine eyes, and an awful temper of her own. But you don't understand such things. Good-night. Old man, be ready for me about this time to-morrow. Good-night—good-night." And again stumbling over Webster, and disturbing Blinker's repose with the fall of a book, this interesting youth made a hurried exit.

"Thank the Lord, he's gone without throwing down my desk, and upsetting my sheets on the Peloponnesian war!" And Mark, having returned to his meditations, Blinker sat down in his old place, and took up his comfortable hum again, from where he had been ruthlessly disturbed.

II.

ONE of the most elegant mansions on Thirty-Fourth Street was owned and lived in by Septimus Lund, Esquire. A man of the world, every inch of him, and a *New York* man of the world. One who, having made his money in too quick a manner, retired from accumulating, and set up for a gentleman. His house was magnificent, his cook superb, his wife gorgeous, his daughters "very stylish." His furniture was talked about, and his living commented on. In fact, the Lunds were all the rage. Mr. Lund's greatest ambition was to be thought an aristocrat—something he couldn't be to save his life; for Wall Street

would stick out all over him. He gave large sums to charitable institutions, and once founded a college in the South with half a million, on the condition it should be called *Lund University*. It was gratefully accepted, and after that Mr. Lund was looked upon as a religious as well as a rich man, and the leading papers gave sketches of his life, and lauded him sky-high, while a few score beggars cursed him deeply and bitterly. They were of no account, however, merely a few of the many who had helped to build up the Lund family by losing little sums of money in stock speculations and gold corners to Mr. Lund and some others. But they cursed the Lund University, nevertheless, while every one else blessed Mr. Lund. Septimus Lund gave largely to the missionaries and Bible Society, and frequently took the chair at religious meetings. Mrs. Lund worshipped Mr. Lund, and the Misses Lund worshipped themselves. Of course they were amongst the leaders of polite society in New York, and much looked up to; and no party of any pretension was complete unless at least one Lund figured as a participant in the amusements of the evening.

Miss Belle Grandison was a leading Baltimore lady. Beautiful, fashionable and rich—what more was to be desired? The Lunds thought nothing except a husband to take charge of her; and accordingly they invited Miss Grandison to spend a time with them, knowing what scores of suitors they could summon to lay siege to her—*bank account*.

Though only knowing of Mr. Mark Eaton, and never having held intercourse with him—except for a moment when he chanced to be introduced to Mrs. Lund, and impressed that lady as a real gentleman—the Lunds were always in the habit of sending elegantly-gotten-up invitations to that gentleman whenever they had anything particularly *recherche* on hand in the way of a reception or hop. However, Mr. Eaton was backward in responding, and actually never accepted one.

Great was the surprise and satisfaction of Mr. Lund, when, on the evening of the reception in honor of Miss Grandison, his dressing-room was burst into by his better-half, with a note in Mr. Eaton's handwriting accepting the invitation.

Mr. Lund was in the act of fastening an

immense cluster of diamonds to his shirt-front, and was standing in a very stiff attitude to avoid creasing the fair white surface; but on learning the intelligence from his dear Lucinda, he was so overcome that his mouth opened too wide, and something like a quid rolled from under his tongue, striking the shirt just below the cluster. Mr. Lund's annoyance was great, but his delight on hearing the joyful news far greater. "It is an ill wind," etc., for Sparks, Mr. Lund's valet, was better off the same day to the extent of one of Cartwright's finest linen.

"Well, my dear, this is gratifying, very indeed," said Mr. Lund.

"It will give tone to the reception, Mr. Lund," answered his wife.

"Decidedly, quite so, my dear Lucinda; and we must have Mark Gathorne Eaton, Esquire, first on the list of gentlemen present in the 'Home,' eh, my dear?"

"It would look well, Mr. Lund, very well," responded Mrs. Lund.

"And, my dear, the Somervilles and Lornes will be sure to hear of it, and, of course, accept our next invitation. Really, after this we shall have all New York at our feet. My position will be better understood, my dear. Society will be eager to recognize in you and the girls, my dear, its brightest ornaments."

This Mr. Lund said with a majestic bow to the mirror, more than to his wife. He probably saw Mrs. Lund in the glass. The lady in question was large enough, certainly.

"I am so glad, my dear, for the dear girls, you see. You must observe how unusually attractive they are," sighed Mrs. Lund.

"Take after their mother, my love," responded Mr. Lund, with another bow to Mrs. Lund in the mirror.

"O Mr. Lund, how can you?" exclaimed the delighted matron, in yellow and other colors which became her well.

"The likeness, my dear, is striking, striking, I repeat," observed Mrs. Lund, his eyes on the glass.

"Of course the girls have many admirers—too many. But most of them are poor, like young Ogilvie, and want fortunes," continued Mrs. Lund.

"Young Ogilvie, my dear, is of good family, very good. His father is a general, you know; and besides, he is very hand-

some. My dear, how does this collar set behind? Ah, thanks, thanks, my love! Really, I should not object to him for a son-in-law; and it is plain he is smitten with our Andromeda."

"Who could help it?" asked the wife, with pride.

"Quite attractive; a very dashing girl, my love," said Mr. Lund.

"Have you noticed her hair I got at B——'s? Really, I never saw a finer match of shade. *Perfectly lovely!* You wouldn't know it from her own."

But Mr. Lund was dressed, and the loving pair left the room.

The magnificent reception-room of Septimus Lund, Esquire, blazed with light. All was a grand glitter of gas-jets, glass, false and real diamonds, gorgeous dresses and sparkling eyes. Crowds of beautiful women moved here and there with studied elegance, followed by a multitude of gentlemen in the extreme of fashion. A continuous hum of voices, the frequent peals of silvery laughter, the chatter and talk, with the dashing execution of a well-known pianist, produced a most brilliant effect. Within, all was gayety and pleasure.

"Bright eyes looked love to eyes which spoke again."

Constant arrivals added beauty to beauty, gallantry to gallantry. Hundreds of the gayest and richest citizens of the great city crowded the *salon* of Septimus Lund; and he had reason to congratulate himself on the keen perceptive faculties and shrewd tact which had procured him such an honor.

"*Nothing* could be more satisfactory," whispered Mrs. Lund, to her devoted husband. "Surely it will astound Mr. Eaton, on his arrival."

Without, it was very cold, and snowing heavily. The street was lined with carriages and lounging footmen. Around the covering which sheltered the flimsily-attired beauties as they quickly ran across from the carriage door, and up the wide flight of steps, stood a little crowd of passers-by, kept back by two big policemen. One, who had looked like a beggar, was ordered off. She tottered away, for it was a woman, in rags, with a thin cloak over her head, under which might have been seen a pinched white face and staring eyes. As she went she muttered:

"They would call me crazy if I told them I once lived in that very house, a happy wife, until that *wretch*, that *hound*, raked all my husband's living into his cursed clutch! O Heaven! why did I not shoot myself with thee, my Willie? I think my time has come at last, Willie! The river is not far away, my love, and it is the *shortest road to thy dear side!*"

"What is the woman talking about?" roughly asked a pampered footman. "Come, move on! Beggars are not allowed 'ere, my girl. Go to the station 'ouse, where they'll give 'ee a night's lodging for nothing."

A laugh followed, and the shade passed on.

The woman in rags was one of those irreligious people who cursed the *Lund University*.

On went the mirth and dancing within, and all appeared highly delighted with the evening. Indeed, it was afterwards spoken of by the "*Home Journal*" as by far the most brilliant affair of the season; also complimenting in high terms the "generous" host and "charming" hostess.

In a less aristocratic paper of the same day, there was a short notice of an unknown woman found drowned, "cause unknown, possibly temporary insanity." There was one shadow less in this world of many shadows. The sun set on one little atom of woe the less, for Willie's wife had sought his side, and taken "the shortest road" to reach it. Who knows but that she found him, and found him better provided for than even Septimus Lund?

One of the last arrivals at the reception was Mark Eaton, accompanied by Harry Ogilvie; and as the stentorian voice of the stalwart footman at the door of the reception-room proclaimed with a grand flourish the names "*Mark Gathorne Eaton, Esquire,*" and "*Harry Ogilvie, Esquire,*" a flutter of pleasurable anticipation agitated good Mrs. Lund, who, in a blaze of silk and diamonds, stood ready to receive her aristocratic guest.

"It was so very kind of dear Mr. Eaton to come!" she said. "How she *hoped* she might have that pleasure *very often!*"

Then followed the necessary introduction. Miss Belle Grandison, be-powdered, be-feathered, be-rouged, smiled sweetly on plain unpretending Mr. Mark Eaton. That she was attractive, had to be admitted. A

grand figure, a glorious complexion, if it was artificial, like the figure, altogether a splendid modern young lady. Evidently she expected this literary Cræsus to be smitten on the spot. Alas! he was no such thing; and after a while escaped from her and the three heavenly Misses Lund. Up bustled Mr. Lund.

"Of course, my dear friend (he called him *friend*), you will be wanted to dance. The young ladies are *dying* to record *your* name, you know," he said, with a smiling face.

"I must ask you, Mr. Lund, with all *due* appreciation of the honor, to excuse me to the ladies," replied Mark, coldly.

"But, my dear sir, my dear Mr. Eaton, allow me to persuade you. The disappointment, you know—really, I—"

"Excuse me, Mr. Lund. I do not dance."

"Not dance! You don't say, really?" exclaimed the grieved host.

"Unfortunately not; it being an accomplishment I never cultivated. Besides, it would interfere with my digestion," said Mark, laughing inwardly.

"Dear me! how sad! But of course, that is entirely another matter. Interfere with your digestion! Dear me! dear me! Of course I'll excuse you to Miss Belle Grandison."

"Thanks! a hundred thanks, my dear sir! Just what I desired." And Mark passed on to the other end of the room, where the crowd was much less.

He wandered about, unknown to most there; and seeing a small room adjoining, he walked slowly in, glad to escape from the crowd. He stood watching the snow-flakes beat against the window, grumbling to himself, and wondering where Harry had gone.

"Just like all the other fools," he said. "Wild after these made-up women. Amongst them all I see not the faintest resemblance to a Diana. The beautiful mistress of Adonis would blush to call such gaudy shallow creatures sisters. And yet these modern sparks, as far as they are able, worship them as Leander worshipped Hero, and Perseus adored his Andromeda. By the way, there is an Andromeda Lund." Then this discontented mortal turned round, and encountered a lady!

"Excuse me, sir. I did not expect to find any one here," she said.

The speaker was not more than eighteen, possessing an exquisite round figure, though rather tall. Her eyes were a lustrous brown, and her hair jet-black, wound round her head in coils, like some old Grecian statue. Her features were extremely classical, and her forehead and whole face shone with a purity and sweetness Mark had never expected to behold in this material world. She stood there with such modest grace and bashfulness, that, out of sympathy, perhaps, Mark in turn lost his presence of mind. His first question was:

"Why do you seek seclusion from such a gay scene as yonder? Surely you should be amongst the dancers."

"O, I do not care much for it," she replied; "and they have so many now."

Then he courteously asked her to be seated; and, wonderful indeed, the woman-hater was soon enjoying a delightful talk with one of the opposite sex, with a mind and taste nearly as highly cultured as his own. After a while he made the remark:

"So you do not reside in New York?"

"No indeed," she replied. "My present home is in Baltimore."

"Then I presume you are travelling with friends? Miss Grandison comes from Baltimore, I believe?" he said, in an inquiring way.

"May I ask who addresses me?" said the young lady.

"My name is Mark Eaton," he replied; "and I should feel favored if you would in turn tell me your name."

"Mabel Eastman, and companion to Miss Grandison," she added, with a falter and a blush. "But pray do not let me detain you. Indeed, it will not look well if you are found here with me. I have heard your name mentioned by Miss Grandison, and I feel sure she would much like your company. O dear!" she added, quite overcome with confusion, that she, a poor "companion," should have monopolized the time of the much-desired and wealthy Mr. Mark Eaton.

"Excuse me, Miss Eastman. I am very comfortable here; and besides, I do not think Miss Grandison would like me. I am a quiet man; you know." And he begged her to keep her seat. So they remained in the little room, and he, making the best use of his time and tongue, soon

obtained from her the greater part of her history. It was the old old tale of a reverse of circumstances.

Mabel Eastman was the only daughter of a once wealthy Southerner, who, sacrificing his fortune in the "Lost Cause," found himself at the end of the strife a ruined man. Out of an immense estate, everything but a scanty pittance had gone, and that was only just enough to support him; while he was compelled to part with the darling of his heart, who, with a Christian patience and resignation, became companion to the rich Miss Grandison, a shallow proud woman, who rather liked the idea that her dependant should be a daughter of one of the first Virginian families.

All this, and more, Mark's quick intellect soon perceived, and he felt at last that he was taking a genuine interest in the conversation of a woman. After nearly an hour thus pleasantly passed, and being again reminded by Miss Eastman that he should join the company, he said, rather hesitatingly:

"Miss Eastman, I am afraid I told a lie a short time since, for I informed Mr. Lund, simply to get away, that I did not dance."

"Then you do dance?" she remarked.

"To tell the truth, I do," he said; "and I hear a Strauss waltz striking up. May I do myself the honor of dancing it with you?"

What would they all think? What would Mr. Lund and the ladies say? for they all knew by this time that Mr. Eaton's digestion did not allow him to dance. What would Miss Grandison say when she should discover her companion, "poor Mabel Eastman," gliding away with the first gentleman in the room, especially when he had excused himself from dancing with her? But Mark didn't care one iota what all thought of his actions. He was a cool indifferent individual, and, if it suited him, he would do it though the whole room cried shame upon him. And though Mabel Eastman was very backward about accepting, and foresaw Miss Grandison's indignant frown, still her pride came to her rescue. In another minute the beautiful but poor, and therefore *despised*, companion of the rich heiress was amidst the dancers, gracefully gliding along under the skillful guidance of the reticent and

haughty Mark Eaton. They were a striking couple; the man, with genius stamped upon every line of his face, erect and determined, proud and cool; the girl, with queenly presence and sylphlike form, her face flushed with the consciousness of her position. *Now*, the centre of attraction; *before*, a quiet corner, anywhere, to escape the crowd of cold vulgar women, rich in this world's goods, but beggars as to the sweet graces she possessed.

For the first time in his life, Mark felt a glow of pride in dancing. He felt glad to be seen amongst them for the sake of this lovely but neglected girl. On every hand, from those who did not know his sweet partner, came wondering exclamations of "Dear me! who can she be?" "How plainly dressed!" "Not a New York girl, I am certain, Mrs. Merton!" remarked a dowager to another of that ilk. "Remarkable I should not know her," another said.

"Look there! by gad!" cried Harry Ogilvie to some friends. "I'm *blowed* if it isn't Eaton! I thought he never danced. But who on earth is the girl?"

"The most beautiful one I ever saw in my life," said another; and so the remarks passed on.

Miss Grandison had just been escorted to a seat by Mr. Lund, and raising her eyeglass, she settled herself down to quiz the waltzers, who, she firmly believed, had lost the most brilliant star when she had retired to rest herself.

Suddenly Mr. Lund exclaimed:

"Why, bless me, my dear Belle! but is not that Mr. Eaton dancing?"

"And my companion! the *jade*!" cried that lady, sinking back, pale as a sheet.

"Impossible, my love!" said Mrs. Lund. "You must be mistaken. No, I declare, you are right. It is Miss Eastman."

"I will give her notice to-night, the impudent hussy!—to ingratiate herself into Mr. Eaton's favor in such an unwarrantable manner! It is outrageous! *shameful*!"

"What is *shameful*?" asked Mr. Harry Ogilvie, who had heard all; "what is shameful, Miss Grandison?"

"O—you there?" exclaimed the lady, rather startled. "I was saying how shameful it was that Mr. Eaton should choose to dance *so late in the evening*, was I not, dear Mrs. Lund?" she asked, with her old self-possession.

"Yes, my love," answered Mrs. Lund, equally unabashed.

"Quite too bad," said Harry, chuckling to himself, over the expert lies of his lady friends.

"I think I know what to do," he said to himself.

After the dance Mark led Miss Eastman to a seat, and devoted himself to her for the rest of the evening, much to the horror and spite of Miss Grandison.

Passing the talkers, Miss Grandison said, in a short curt way:

"Excuse me, Mr. Eaton, but as I intend retiring shortly, I must request *my attendant*, Miss Eastman, to see that preparations are made for me."

She didn't want to know any such thing. Mark rose, and holding out his hand to Miss Eastman, he said:

"I will not detain you longer. I am going to slip away unperceived." Adding in a low voice, "When *you* are gone, I shall not care for other society. May I call on you to-morrow?"

Taking her silence and eloquent blush for a sufficient answer, he wished her good-night, having escorted her to the door. Then he bade a cool farewell to his host and hostess, not appearing to see Miss Grandison, who stood close by him shivering with rage. As he was leaving, Harry sprang into the carriage, and rattled away a quantity of empty nothings, till he found himself alone with Mark and Blinker; then he began:

"Mark, old fellow, I never saw you come out so before. Who was she?"

"Miss Mabel Eastman," replied Mark, slowly, sinking into his chair, and staring at the fire.

"Well, I *never!* if it doesn't beat all!"

"What?" asked Mark.

"Why, *you're caught*, that's all!" laughed Harry.

"You're an idiot!" said Mark, politely.

"Do you mean to say that you are *not* caught? Come, be frank, old man; you can trust me, you know," pleaded Harry.

"I am not ashamed to own to it. I love that girl. *Now* are you satisfied?" he cried, giving the fire a vigorous stir.

"Quite, old man. She's a rare beauty, and looks good as beautiful. Here's my hand."

"Allow me," continued that volatile youth, "to be the first to congratulate

thee, most potent bachelor, in having fallen a prey to that unsparing and destructive though delicious young god!"

"Peace, I pray you, Harry!" cried Mark. "She may not like me."

"May not fiddlesticks! *you*, the greatest catch in the city! *you*, the eloquent Mark Eaton! I tell you the girl has taste."

"Well, good-night. I want to think it over," said Mark.

"Shall I tell you something I heard, old man?" Harry said, going to the door.

"Say on, tormentor."

"I was behind Miss Grandison's chair, and that precious creature told Mrs. Lund that she would send Miss Eastman off within a week. I merely tell you so you can arrange matters satisfactorily, you know, old boy. Adieu." And the door closed on the magnificent Harry Ogilvie.

"*Will she, indeed?*" soliloquized Mark. "Verily, she had better. I will act at once, then, Miss Rouge-pot. Yes, I am in love, 'pon my word! *The darling! the angel!* I must get her from the she-dragon—the *beauty! the darling!*" he said, again.

"I will propose to-morrow, *directly* after breakfast, by George!"

Blinker looked up, and began to hum cosily.

"Blinker, old man, I am in love. You wouldn't think of it, perhaps, but I am; and I think *she* likes me, Blinker. She has a sweet name—Mabel. Pretty, isn't it, old cat? Blinker, I won't rest till I have her here, right in this chair, too. What do you think of that? Yes, old whiskers, I am 'caught,' as that impudent fellow said. I thought I *never* should be. Dear me! I am not very old—thirty-five; just about twice her age, I should say. I wonder if she will object to the difference? I will swear I'm only *twenty*. She won't know, unless you tell her, Blinker. My beauty, how I love you! I don't mean *you*, you cat, but *Mabel*—sweet Mabel Eastman. *Eaton* sounds better, I think." And so he went rambling on, and the old cat sat blinking at him, and humming like a kettle on the hob.

Mabel was dismissed, of course, and went home to her father's little bit of a house in Richmond; though Mark presented herself the day after the reception, and begged her to marry him. She told him if he meant it to come again at a later date. A week after (*she said six months*)

he rushed off to Richmond, and so delighted the old man, and made such violent love to the daughter, that she yielded to him, and married him soon after. And now all three live happily in Mark's house, and Harry is just as foolish as ever, and Blinker hums on more than ever, and tries to drown the "billing and cooing" in the

big armchair, but all in vain. So, though Mark held out manfully so long, and thought he would live and die wedded only to his books and writings, yet there dawned a day in his, as in all lives, when the sweetness of love was unfolded to him, and the wooing, the marriage, and the only perfect and true living, came to pass.

IN LOVE WITH A PHOTOGRAPH.

BY KATE SEAFOAM.

I DID not wonder, as I looked at that fair sweet face, that Fred was, as he had said, in love with a photograph. It was such a lovely face—such soft flexible lines and curves defined the graceful contour, such intellectual susceptibility beamed from the soulful dark eyes—not a regular pink-and-white doll-like beauty, but something deeper, far sweeter.

The artist had a most expressive subject, and he had done the sweet face justice as much as art can do. You seemed to see just how those clear deep eyes could beam with sentiment or flash with joy; you knew how soft the pure face was, how fine and glossy the abundant dark hair clustering around the broad brow—a face tender, strong and true, a pure womanly woman. I gazed long and intently at it, and Fred said, impatiently:

"Isn't she a beauty, Harry? Just my ideal, you see."

"Yes, very beautiful," I answered, dreamily, wondering at the fanciful spell this lovely picture had cast over me, and where I had seen a face like, yet unlike, this one.

"You say it as if you hardly meant it!" he cried out, in his impetuous way, mistaking my absent manner for indifference. "Give it to me! You are such a heartless creature, you can't appreciate anything, not even such glorious beauty as that! But there, what can one expect of such an obdurate old bachelor as you are, Hal?" And he snatched the picture from me.

"Isn't it queer about my finding it, Harry?" Fred continued, rousing me from the dreamy reverie into which I was falling.

"Yes; how did it happen, Fred?"

"Walking leisurely along Tremont St., contemplating the exquisite fit of my new boots, I saw a neat-looking little package on the pavement. I took it up, wondering, listlessly, what it contained; but listlessness changed to intense admiration, I assure you, Hal, when I saw that lovely face."

"I've seen a face so very like it somewhere, Fred," I said, musingly, for somehow that young lovely face awakened an

olden memory. An old-fashioned substantial farmhouse, widely-spreading elms bending lowly over the moss-covered well, the heavy branches creaking dismally as they swept against the weather-beaten stoop in the storms I remembered so well—or swayed lightly by the gentle summer breeze, low sweet murmurs of the whispering leaves blending, a pleasing monotone, with the wild birds' gay minstrelsy. A bright sweet face, so sunny and fair, shaded by shining golden hair; a petite graceful form bending over an aged man's chair, the golden tresses of youth resting lovingly among the silvery locks of age. Sleek cattle, gentle but spirited horses; geese, turkeys and chickens, a lively cackling brood around the old porch in the morning, fed by a dainty white hand, a sweetly shy face raised to my greeting—a calm peaceful scene, then a dark blank uncertainty.

"What in the deuce ails you, Hal? If you have seen the original of that sweet picture, why can't you tell me about it? Here I've asked you three times, and you haven't answered." And Fred gave me a forcible reminder with his elbow.

"I—well, really, there is nothing to tell," I stammered.

"Humph! I can keep the picture, I suppose, and I mean to find the original if possible," Fred said, surlily, as he left me.

I was like one in a dream the day succeeding Fred's revelation, and at night the sweetly-sad illusion continued, and I wandered through fields and pastures fresh with summer's verdure, dreamed idly by the murmuring brook, casting my line for the shining speckled trout, a saucy smiling face beaming from the clear water.

Three days afterwards, when the busy world had nearly dispelled the sweet dream, and I was the cold calculating man again, Fred entered my office with a dubious face, and seating himself violently, he exclaimed:

"Just my luck, Hal! Showed that picture to Brown, because I knew he was such a good judge of beauty, being an ar-

tist, you see; and then I let a few see my treasure, hoping some of them might enlighten me as to the original. Well, you see, Brown, soon as he caught a glimpse of that face, he just gave me a rousing slap, and says he, 'Good, Fred! Much obliged to you for restoring property. I felt a little blue over the loss of this—such a fine face, you see. Confounded careless in me to drop it on the street, I know, but I suppose I pulled it out with my handkerchief.' And he took the picture from me, coolly.

"Look here, now, Brown! what do you mean?" I asked.

"Mean, Fred? I mean to say this pretty picture belongs to me, and I'm much obliged to you for restoring it.' And then he goes on to tell a lot about taking that picture some three years ago, when he was a travelling artist. You see, he's changed all of that since his uncle died and left him a handsome property, but he'd kept this picture, with others of his finest ones, and he was taking it over to Carlton's, it seems; and the lovely face enlarged, will, I presume, hold a prominent place in a painting he is getting up. Well, I had to give it up, you see, Hal, without learning anything about the original. Too bad, wasn't it?"

I do not know what strange impulse actuated me. We are often led, as it would seem, by some overpowering influence apart from ourselves, and are at a loss to account for the inexplicable freaks which sometimes possess us in the most absurd involuntary manner.

Truly, it seemed wholly involuntary on my part, that abrupt turn and hasty entrance to the dingy pawnbroker's shop that dreary drizzly March day; a strange freak even for one of my odd restless disposition.

I scarcely realized where I was, till the palaverer man in attendance drew near to know my wishes. No, most assuredly, I did not want anything here. A feeling akin to disgust crept over me as I glanced around the dingy place, and the question rose in my mind:

"Why had I come here?"

To him I answered, rather crustily, I fear:

"Not anything."

He drew back a step, and looked at me

suspiciously. From beyond the gaudy but dirty screen, that separated the low dark room, came the sound of voices; at first but an indistinct murmur, as I heard them heedlessly, then a sweet tremulous voice roused me completely, stirring my cold heart, and quickening my sluggish pulses as they had not been quickened for years, by its mournful pathetic sweetness. But dingy pawnbroker's shop and dreary March day faded away beneath the brightness of a fond memory.

I stood among the newmown hay, on a fair June day, and heard a bonnie lassie's ringing laughter, as she fled from amongst the sweet-scented clover I heaped up around her, instead of a sorrowful woman's pathetic voice.

Did you ever think how many of the most important effective events of our lives hinge, as it were, upon trifles?

Then these words, in a pleading way:

"And you won't let that go? Please, sir, give me longer time to redeem it, for I prize it very highly, and am loth to part with it, even for a while. I brought everything else of value, hoping to have more work, and keep this."

How sadly plaintive the soft voice was! A few more low words, indistinct to me, and then the screen was drawn aside. With a hasty gliding step, grace itself, a lady passed me, her face hidden by a thick veil, and hurried out to the street. My breath came hurriedly, and a strange giddy sensation nearly overpowered me as she passed me.

A peculiar sensation, for such a staid bachelor as I was, having been considered wholly exempt for years, in that way, from that troublesome organ called a heart.

"Yes, a very pretty trinket," the coarse voice said, and roused me from my strange trance-like state.

The two men were examining the trinket the lady had left. Then, holding it out for my inspection, he said:

"Very curious pretty trinket."

Was I dreaming? I took the trinket from him, that peculiar sensation nearly overpowering me again.

A tiny locket of fretted gold of most unique peculiar design. Again the scene changed, and in a quickly panoramic view the years of toil and strife rose before me—the years of hardening bitterness in which

I had gained wealth. I recalled vividly that day, far back in the years ago, when the nearly beardless youth unearthed his first nugget of glittering metal, far away from the green valleys and rugged hills of his Northern home, murmuring, sullenly, "Gold! I live for wealth now;" shutting his mouth firmly, working in bitterness as that lovely face kept rising tantalizingly before him. And the years went on, years of toil and heart bitterness, and the farmer boy who had been so proud and happy when he had saved enough from his scanty earnings to purchase the cunning curious locket for his little sweetheart, became a rich hardened man in those years. I touched the tiny spring—the boyish face and the lock of hair had been removed. Then, with sadly forcible reiteration the low tremulous words came to me, bringing strange emotions. All the dark years of hardening bitterness and doubt rolled back with a mighty surge before the sweetly-assuring conviction. She had kept my gift all of these years! She had parted with everything else of value, through dire necessity, before this, my gift. I had heard the sweet voice say that. It was but a momentary retrospection, so quickly does thought travel, so deftly does tenacious Memory unveil her cherished treasures; and the blear-eyed pawnbroker was holding out his hand for the treasure-trove I held in nearly frantic grasp. I realized I must give it up, and then the terrible conviction flashed over me why this gift was here. My darling, the one sweet love of my life, was suffering, grappling with the relentless monster poverty, while I was living in ease, revelling in wealth; all of which I felt I would gladly yield now for one glimpse of that loved face.

With a quick start I came back to a realization of the stern reality. I questioned the man with eagerness. Yes, she was needy, suffering. He knew where she did reside a while ago—had taken some furniture from her. He directed me to the place. I hastened away, but on inquiry learned that no such person dwelt there now; poverty had forced her to a cheaper place. With heart-sickening anxiety and loathing I could not prevent, I sought among all of the squalid dens where the affluent city's poor huddled together for nearly a week, vainly, for my lost one.

Then, one day, when wearied and disgusted with all of the misery and vain show of this life, I was returning to my luxurious rooms from my fruitless search, all at once, quick as a flash, this bitter truth came home to me—my love, the woman I was now searching for, had married years ago, was probably the wife of another now. I stopped still among the hurrying crowd on the busy street, transfixed by the harsh truth I had known years before.

The crowd jostled me. I passed along, and then came the sweetly-assuring thought that she had kept, prized my gift through all these years, and, well, it did not matter whether she loved me or not. I loved her, and I knew that she was suffering, and my love was sufficient for that evil; I must find her and care for her. I never had much opinion of a love that did not make its object an especial care, extending a watchful, provident interest under all circumstances, in spite of everything and everybody. I quickened my lagging steps under this inspiring determination, when suddenly my progress was arrested by a crowd collected around some object prostrate upon the pavement. I pressed forward as some one in the crowd said, excitedly, "She is surely dead!"

A fair pale face, marked indelibly with suffering and care, was upturned to the curious gaze. My heart gave one wild bound. I had found my darling! I pushed them rudely aside and took her in my arms, a restful feeling of sweet thankfulness and gratitude pervading every sense as I held her closely to me a moment; the first sensation of rest I had experienced for years.

"Is she dead, Mr. Seymour? She dropped right down in front of us, all of a sudden, poor thing!" said a lady beside me; and I was roused to a sense of existing circumstances.

I took her to an apothecary close by, and dispersing the curious crowd, commenced the work of resuscitation. She was not dead, but exhausted vitality had yielded in the street—she was nearly in a state of starvation, utter destitution. How fervently I thanked God for the means the years had given me, and still more for the sweet rest given back to my bitter life.

The years of suffering had swept away all the harshness from the remembrance of that youthful parting, when I had pleaded for her love; her answer, so ardent-

ly besought, had banished the sweetest dream of my life. She confessed with girlish shyness that she loved me "ever so much," but she could not, would not marry a poor farmer. She should wed a rich man, if any; one who could give her the position she desired in life, and support her in style in the city; she was tired of dull country life, of plodding farmers. Such a life she could not think of accepting when she married. She was very, very sorry to give me such an answer, but I must not think of her in that way any more. She would be a friend, a sister to me ever—that was all. Of course my impetuous heart was maddened, and I said hot angry words and left her in tears, bidding her marry the conceited dandy if she wished to, I would have none of her friendship. You see I was insanely jealous, too, for I knew well whence came this, to me, cruel change in one whom I had loved so dearly. The conceited dandy as I had called him, had boarded in our neighborhood for a while, and from the first I had disliked and distrusted him, before he paid such assiduous attention to my chosen one.

So we parted, and I turned from quiet paths and love to the worldly struggle for wealth. She married the city idler who coveted the fine farm her aged grandfather left his pet, and she woke from the gilded dream, a bitter illusion, the gold all dross, and her valuable possession of arable land sold to be squandered by the insatiate gambler.

It was but a brief infatuation which can never bring the satisfying rest of true love. The old story of dissipation, neglect and want. The downward road is steep and quickly travelled. Soon all was squandered, the gambler died a violent death, and left his widow and two children destitute. For a time the mother and eldest daughter had struggled bravely against want, then on account of dull times they were unable to obtain work. Little Nellie, the darling and pet of mother and sister, after a long distressing illness, was taken to that better land where want and suffering are unknown.

Wearied and heart-sick the enfeebled mother was for a while nearly prostrated by this bereavement, only to be rudely aroused by pressing daily wants to the realization of their destitution. Nearly everything of value was sold to minister to daily

necessities, and in a protracted fruitless search for work Maud took a violent cold, and when I took my lost love to her humble home, one small room in the suburbs occupied by mother and daughter, I found her just recovering from a severe attack of congestion of the lungs. She was still very beautiful, although the fair cheeks had lost, in this early struggle of life, some of the rounded symmetry portrayed in the lovely picture. But, thank God, it was right at last—after the darkness the light. Nearly three months later Fred returned to the city, from some of his erratic wanderings, and entered my office, his sunny face quite cloudy. I met him with a jovial hearty greeting, for I never was more pleased to see the dear son of my deceased friend, left by his dying father in my care, for I had pleasant news to tell him. "What's the matter, Fred?" I asked, after the greeting.

"Not much, only bored to death, nearly. But what ails you, Wal? I should say this dull world had treated you to some superb luck, judging by that radiant phiz of yours," he replied.

"I've good news for you, my boy. I have got a pleasant home for you, and I have found your lovable photograph, and she is lovable, truly, Fred."

Fred caught his breath quickly as he flung away his cigar, and seizing my arm nervously, he demanded explanations, which were readily given.

Suffice it to say that the wooing was successful. In six months I gave the hand, and I was fully assured the whole heart also of my beautiful Maud, my loved wife's daughter, to my adopted son, my noble-hearted Fred. They are as handsome loving a couple as one would wish to see.

"But not happier in their buoyant youthful love than we who have passed through the valley of bitterness, unto the restful peace of satisfied affection," says my fair wife, as she nestles closely to me—my sweet loving wife from whose broad pure brow many of the lines of suffering have passed beneath the light of love.

"No, my love, that they could not be, for, after all, dear one, it is only through suffering that we reach the full satisfying measure of happiness. Our richest blessings are always suffering-bought, and

"Earth's winter flowers are sweeter far
Than all spring's dewy posies."

IN THE MORNING.

BY CARRIE D. BEEBE.

"In the morning," she said, looking away from the face which sought hers with a glance persistent, questioning. "I cannot decide to-night. In the morning I will give my answer."

"Why not to-night?" he asked, in reply. "I have heard, Miss North, that your ideas are peculiar, romantic. Your acts are original and decided; you do not believe in walking in the same old path in which your mother and grandmother trod before you."

"True; but I usually please myself, Mr. Thorne. Therefore, my only answer now is—in the morning."

The moon shone whitely upon her face, and her face was very white to-night. Miss North seldom betrayed any nervous emotion before people. She was cool and self-reliant, rarely losing her self-poise. But now the slender ringed fingers of her fair shapely hand trembled a trifle as they closed tightly over her daintily-carved ivory fan, and she fluttered it a little unsteadily, though the breeze came strong and sweet from the garden below.

A hush seemed to come over them for the space of a moment. She waited, thinking he might answer, and drew back a trifle, leaning her head against the fringed cypress sprays that clung to the pillars of the porch. He earnestly scanned the proud face and figure, for he had met them for the first time that day; and he had not yet become familiar with the shade of the yellow-brown hair, nor the changing lights and shadows of the deep restless violet eyes. They had been defiant, then frightened; now they were cold, and now tender, and at last they grew tired and wistful. Yet, with all these changes, they never lost their honest expression, but looked like great child-eyes set in a woman's thoughtful face. And as he watched her his heart yearned toward her, as it had never before hungered for woman's love.

"Miss North?" he said; and then he paused a moment, seeming to study her face again.

For answer she raised her eyes to his

questioningly, and the weary look in their depths was more decided now.

"Ada!" he said, again, more softly; and as he spoke her name, a flush crept over her face, and she drooped her eyes.

"If you would only say 'yes' to-night?" he pleaded; and there was a soft light in his eyes. "I love you just as dearly as though I had known you for years. You are my sister's dearest friend, and you are almost as familiar with my character and ways as though you had known me a lifetime. Mary would be delighted, and my parents pleased, also. You have no near friends to consult. Say yes to-night, and if my love and devotion can repay you, you shall never regret it. And it will be so sweet for me to remember hereafter, that I asked you to be my wife the first night I ever met you, and you had faith enough to trust me and promise."

His face was very manly and tender, his glance and smile loving and persuasive, and Ada could not meet them unmoved. She turned her face away suddenly, and looked steadily out toward the sky. A slight shiver passed over her frame, and she moved, as if to leave him.

"The dew is falling," she said, seeming unable to frame any other excuse, in her confusion, for going into the house.

"Yes," he answered, taking her hand, a quick smile flashing over his face. "It is falling in your eyes, my darling."

"Don't!" she said, with a half-sob that touched him, and looking bravely up, though her eyes were filled with tears. "In the morning I will tell you, and tell you, too, why I could not answer you to-night."

"In the morning, then," he answered, touching his lips lightly but tenderly to the white hand he held within his own.

She turned quickly, and he heard her light swift footsteps ascending the staircase and along the passage, the slight rustle of a train in their wake. The door of her room opened and closed, the key, with a decided click, shot the bolt in place, and he heard no more. Then he walked down into the garden, rather restlessly, wonder-

ing within himself if he had not been a shade too rash, and feeling a slight sense of relief, if the truth were told, that she had not answered him.

He was wonderfully interested in her, certainly. For more than a year her praises had sounded in his ears, rang with constant changes, by the voice of his sister Mary. He had not thought to like her; and when he had troubled himself to think of the subject at all, it was another woman he had pictured; stately, strong-minded, self-satisfied, and disagreeable in the extreme. Without wealth she had maintained a prominent place in fashionable circles, he had been told. And, without brains, he argued, she had palmed herself off for a woman who was both lovable and wise. Not the best logic in the world, you will say; but, to be candid, it was only his first impression in the matter, and he had not taken the trouble to think upon the subject at all.

So, when he met her that day, at the house of a friend, where she was spending the summer with his sister, his first sensations were of surprise, then pleasure. A self-possessed graceful girl bowed politely to a tall handsome man, and then, as though it were an after-thought, quietly put out her hand to him. He forgot to view her critically, as he intended to do. Afterward, when his sister came to consult her about some trifle in the way of dress, he remembered his intention, but, somehow, it did not seem an easy thing to do.

A well-fitting white dress set off a round but not too tapering waist; there was a heavy braid of yellow-brown hair; a drooping curl; a knot of ribbon here, a fall of lace there; a flower pulled carelessly through a soft-colored tie at the white throat. A combination he scarcely understood, yet harmonious in the extreme. She was stately, yet there was a certain prettiness about her all her own. She seemed both gentle and strong, and before he was aware of it, she had entered a door in his heart, and shot the bolt as securely as she had fastened the door of her room that night. A recess, too, it was, that he had never known before. He was not very young, this man of whom I am telling. He had not been without his flirtations, his loves, perhaps. But this girl's soft voice touched a chord in his heart which had never vibrated before. Her

eyes were "the sweetest his had seen." He did not pause to ask why. He had been a generous man, because he dispensed his charities with lavish hand. He was very tender and kind to those he loved, but always best of all to himself.

If he fancied a house, a yacht, a horse, he purchased it at once. He never sold his present moment for the future; never longed for a time to come when he should be happier, but always grasped the present pleasure, preferring it to promises of future joy. So, when he met this girl, he said, at first, "she's very lovely;" and by-and-by, when he had watched her more closely, he told himself that in all his travels he had never before met a woman that in his heart of hearts he longed to call his own.

That night, when the stars were out, and the moon was shining, they were all sitting upon the porch. First one and then another, under various excuses, passed into the house. Miss Thorne went in to play, and Mr. Thorne and Ada still stood upon the porch, listening. The words of a song floated softly out, and they seemed to stir his mind with a sudden purpose.

"Many a girl I have loved for a minute,
Many a beautiful face have I seen,
Ever and aye there was something in it,
Something which could not be hers, my queen."

He scanned her face over critically. There was not a feature or expression he would change had he the power. There was more restlessness in her eyes to-night, and her face looked paler than it had been in the day. Perhaps her heart was touched also, but no matter. He was sure she did not dislike him, and he could win her love in time. And then, without waiting further, he asked her to be his wife.

When Miss Ada North had closed the door to the outside world, she went to the window, and, throwing open the shutters, she knelt down in the moonlight. Tearing a crumpled letter from her pocket, she smoothed it almost fiercely, and read its meaning again, by the white light of the moon. Her eyes were wild in their restlessness now, her hands trembled, her red lips were firmly set. It was written by a man's hand, this letter; her heart had often throbbed for joy at sight of this same writing, but now it only brought a feeling of cold distrust and dislike.

She rose, closed the shutters, lighted the lamp, and, taking a package of letters

from her trunk, she sat down and read them slowly, one by one. They were all in this same handwriting, and all breathing of love and devotion to herself. Her task was not half accomplished when she heard quick footsteps in the passage, the knob of the door was turned, then a hurried knock, all in the space of a breath.

She rose hastily and unlocked the door. Mary Thorne entered, uttering an exclamation as she saw the letters scattered about the table.

"What is it, Ada dear?" she said.

"There was one secret which I always guarded from you, Mary," Ada replied, quietly. "Sit down. I will tell you all to-night, for to-morrow I shall put it all aside."

"Don't tell me unless you feel just like it, Ada," her friend said, gently.

"But I *must* tell you!" she exclaimed, impetuously. "You knew I received letters from John Easton; but, as he was the son of my guardian, you were never sure whether they were upon business, friendship or love. For two years I was engaged to be his wife. We kept it secret, for it was his wish. Three days ago this last letter came, saying he was mistaken in thinking he loved me, and asking me to release him from his promise. I have not yet answered him. Not that I hesitated for a moment, but I could not bring myself to write him yet."

"Why should you allow this to trouble you?" asked Mary. "I, for one, am heartily glad; for, though my acquaintance with Mr. Easton is very slight, I have always disliked him; and then—"

"And then," interrupted Ada, a smile breaking over her pale face, "I know what you would say, dear. And the tale is not half told. Your brother asked me to-night to be his wife."

The words were uttered quietly, but the effect upon her listener was electric. She sprang up, overturned her chair, and caught Ada in her arms.

"I'm so glad!" she said. "You told him yes, didn't you? Of course, you couldn't well do otherwise."

"No," Ada answered, soberly.

"What?" And Mary held her out at arm's length, and gazed upon her for a moment in speechless astonishment. "Did you refuse him?" she gasped, at last.

"No," Ada again replied. "I am to

give him my answer in the morning."

"O, I see! Don't you dare to say no to him, you darling! I have always coveted you for my sister ever since I knew you first. I'll hurry to bed, and then you poke these old letters in the fire, make up your mind to say yes, and go to sleep yourself."

"The letters I must return," she said. "I wish to review some of them first. I may sit up very late, but don't let me disturb you."

She sat down to her task, and looked the love-missives over one by one. Selecting four as correct types of the others, she laid them aside together with the last one received. Then, writing a reply, she gathered the others together, and put them away.

In the morning she rose early. Braiding her hair slowly before the mirror, she glanced down into the garden below. Mr. Thorne was there, chatting with the gardener, who was cutting some flowers. She scanned his face and tall handsome figure critically for a moment, and when she turned back to the mirror, she met wide-opened half-frightened eyes and a very white face.

"What have I done?" she asked herself, with a little feeling of doubt and foreboding. "Or, rather, what am I about to do. I wonder if Fortune favors the rash as well as the brave?"

There was a tap at the door, a bouquet with Mr. Thorne's compliments, and a little note among the flowers.

He was waiting for her answer. Would she meet him in the garden in half an hour? It was a whole hour yet till breakfast time. He was impatient—would she come?

The messenger was waiting. "Yes," she said, in answer. "Tell Mr. Thorne I will come." Then she closed the door, and turning to her desk, she took out the four letters she had laid aside the night before. She sat down, shuffling them absently, as one would a pack of cards.

"It's all a game," she said, "and I am playing in the dark." And she shivered, though the morning was warm.

The half hour had nearly passed when she rose, and taking the bouquet Mr. Thorne had sent her, she pulled some of the flowers through her braids, and her letters in her hand, she went down.

He was waiting at the door, with an ex-

pectant look in his eyes that was hard for her to face in the full morning light; so that by the time they had walked down the path to a quiet nook in a shaded corner of the garden, her eyes were flashing, her cheeks glowing, and the hands that clasped the letters trembling a trifle; and as for Mr. Thorne—he was, to be candid, slightly nervous, too. She, giving him a shy fluttering glance, saw it, and was inwardly thankful; for she had learned to be suspicious of these men who are always self-possessed and cool.

"Well, my darling," he said, questioningly, a smile breaking over his face.

"Well," she answered him, hesitating, and not knowing what to say.

"Have you the answer I am waiting for ready?" he asked.

"You have not repented?" she said. "You are still willing to take me for better or worse, in your morning conclusions?"

"Still willing," he answered, "and very anxious, too. Do you doubt it?"

"No," she replied, staidly. "I don't think I fully understand you, but I do not doubt. Now I will tell you what I could not explain last night. For a long time I was engaged to John Easton. I knew him from my childhood, a quiet boy, studious and sober to a fault. As a man, he seemed the soul of honor, cautious, reliable and cool. When he asked me to marry him I said, if there is a man in this world I can fully respect and trust, it is John Easton. I never questioned him, never doubted anything he did or said. He wrote me often, fond, almost foolish letters. Here are four I selected to show you. Would you like to see them?"

"No," he answered, taking the hand that held them in both his. "You don't want me to read them, darling, and I will not. I can fully believe what you say without proof."

She thanked him with her eyes. Her lips were growing unsteady, and she waited a moment, trying to find her voice.

"Don't tell me this if it distresses you," he said, touching his lips to hers tenderly. "Tell me you are not bound to this man now; that is enough for me. By-and-by, when you feel more composed I will listen to the story, if you wish me to hear it."

She lifted her eyes to his face, and they looked more childish than ever in their surprise.

"You are not generous enough for this?" she asked.

"I am not generous where I do not love," he answered. "But I love you fully, I trust you utterly; I know you would not stoop to deceive me in anything."

"How we may wrong one man by judging him by another?" she cried, impetuously. "No, I am not bound to this man. He, the honorable, noble-hearted gentleman, who all his friends believe has never made a mistake in his life, broke the bond after a two years' engagement, saying he was mistaken in believing he loved me. And you, though you have seen me for scarcely twenty-four hours, are willing to take me altogether upon trust."

"Very willing, and very eager, too. There, you shall tell me no more now. Only promise me you will be my wife, and I am satisfied. Afterward, I will gladly listen to any confidences you wish to bestow upon me; and will make it my earnest care to keep troubles, as far as my power extends, away from you."

"But I hope you don't think me a saint," she said, still afraid.

"A saint," he repeated, with a smile. "No, little one, I know you are only a woman. I wouldn't care to wed a saint, dear, but I want you very much, for I love you, and believe you are a true noble woman. Of course I know you have faults, but I love you well enough to bear with them. Do you still hesitate? What more, darling, can I say?"

"Nothing," she answered. "I have many faults, I know, but I never yet deceived any one who was generous enough to trust me. I will be your wife whenever you desire. And more—though you have not asked me, though you have as yet been satisfied with avowing your love for me alone, without urging me, before I scarcely knew, to say I loved you—you are far dearer to me this moment than ever John Easton was in the full tide of my first devotion to him."

He clasped her still more closely.

"My darling," he said, laying his cheek to hers, "you are a girl after my own heart. There may be a life of trial before us—we cannot tell. But of this I am sure, you shall never regret that I offered myself to you the first night I ever knew you, and you had faith enough in me to take me in the morning."